



BNSC Welfare & Safeguarding Policy

Swimming is one of the few sports which can be enjoyed throughout life and anyone of any age or ability can participate. It develops physical skills, self-esteem and the ability to be a team player, as well as providing an opportunity to achieve individual success.

Bristol North Swimming Club (BNSC), founded in 1922, is primarily a competitive swimming club. Its purpose is to provide members with the opportunities to swim at all levels from learning to swim to the very highest levels of the sport.

BNSC is committed to providing a nurturing, friendly and safe environment for all our members who wish to participate in swimming. Creating the environment that we and our members want is a joint responsibility, whether you are a swimmer, coach, committee member, club volunteer or parents/carer.

We want to make sure that everyone is working together to foster the caring and fun environment which promotes a life-long love of this sport.

To achieve this, we have established a set of policies, including codes of conduct, which outline the responsibilities and behaviour expected of all adult and child members of the club, particularly in relation to the safeguarding and welfare of a children and adults at risk.

They apply to all people involved with the club:

- Swimmers
- Parents and Carers
- Coaches and Teachers
- Committee members, officials and volunteers who work directly with children

All members, parents/carers, and volunteers commit to understanding, embracing, acting out, and advocating their responsibilities laid out in these pages.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and by all playing our part we will achieve the best outcomes for our members.



1 Terms of Reference

This policy is founded on Swim England's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures, known as **Wavepower**, and the rules of venues frequently used by the club. It should be read in conjunction with the Swim England Codes of Ethics, BNSC Club Rules, and BNSC Data Protection Policy:

- [Swim England Code of Ethics](#)
- [Swim England Wavepower](#)
- [the Swim England Handbook \(including the Swim England judicial and safeguarding regulations\); and](#)
- [the Swim England Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)

Introduction

BNSC believes that all our members have the right to stay safe and have fun. We will safeguard adults by endeavouring to ensure that our activities are delivered in a way which keeps all members safe, and we are committed to creating a culture of zero-tolerance of harm, including to adults at risk. This requires the recognition of those who may be at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk; knowing how adult abuse, exploitation or neglect manifests itself; and a necessity to report safeguarding concerns.

This extends to recognising and reporting harm experienced anywhere, including within our activities, within other organised community or voluntary activities, in the community, in the person's own home and in any care setting.

To do this we will comply with the Swim England, and relevant other legislation implementing best safeguarding practices and to upholding the rights of all adults to live free from harm and abuse, including exploitation and neglect. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Swim England guidance which can be accessed here:

Wavepower provides the detail which you will need to address any actual situations arising and this policy does not replace training. In this policy we outline more detail about adult than child safeguarding: this is because the requirement for adult safeguarding is newer and many people are less familiar with the concept.

<https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/wavepower-child-safeguarding-for-clubs/>

2 Key Principles

The Principles underpinning child safeguarding

Wavepower, sets out ten key principles which underpin the clubs' approach to both member Welfare and Child Safeguarding:

- Swim England is committed to ensuring that all children who take part in Swim England activities can have fun and participate in an environment that keeps them safe from harm.
- The welfare of the child is and must always be paramount.



- It is every child and young person's right to be protected from abuse irrespective of their age, gender, faith or religion, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, background, economic position, disability or level of ability.
- Allegations of abuse or concerns regarding children will be treated seriously and will be responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Swim England recognises the responsibilities of the statutory agencies and is committed to complying with safeguarding partners and the statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children (2018)' [gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2)
- Confidentiality will be always maintained appropriately and the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration when making decisions on whether or not to share information about them.
- Swim England will support all adults involved in the sport to understand their roles and responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and protecting children in the sport.
- Swim England will provide training and education to all adults involved in the sport to be aware of, and understand, what best practice is and how to manage any child welfare concerns they identify or are informed of.
- Parents/guardians, children and all participants involved in the sport can access advice and guidance on child welfare matters from the Swim England Child Safeguarding Team, the Swim England/NSPCC Swimline Child Protection helpline or from the statutory agencies.
- All Swim England organisations must adopt Wavepower and ensure that, when they receive new information, the publication is updated as appropriate.

The principles underpinning adult safeguarding

1. empowerment – people should be supported and encouraged to make their own decisions with informed consent;
2. prevention – it is better to take action before harm occurs where possible;
3. proportionality – the least intrusive response that is appropriate to the risk presented should be taken;
4. protection – support and representation should be given to those in the greatest need;
5. partnership – local solutions should be provided by services working within their own communities. Such communities have a key role to play in prevention, detection and reporting; and
6. accountability – safeguarding should be delivered with accountability and transparency.

3 Duty of Care

Definitions

A **child** is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

An **Adult at Risk** is an individual aged 18 years and over who:



- a. has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); and
- b. is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- c. as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

All three requirements must be met in order to be considered an Adult at Risk.

4 Responsibilities

4.1 The club's responsibilities

All organisations and individuals have a duty of care to safeguard children when they are participating in their activities.

BNSC accepts its responsibilities and commits to ensuring as far as practicable:

- Adopt Wavepower 2024 version 2.1 in full
- All members, parents/carers, and regular volunteers have knowledge of this policy.
- All coaches, teachers, and club staff understand, accept and act out their responsibilities as outlined in this policy if they have any concerns about a child's safety or welfare.
- All parents, carers, and swimmers understand, accept and act out their responsibilities as outlined in this policy.
- All parents, carers, and swimmers understand the contact points and procedures to follow should they have an issue in relation to safeguarding members of the club.
(for contact details, see **BNSC Contact Details**)
- Members can be assured that they would be supported by BNSC if they approach the club in relation to issues or safeguarding matters.
- Promote a culture of listening to children

This responsibility does not remain solely on the club. All members, parents/carers, and volunteers have a role to play and therefore we have clearly laid out your commitment below.

4.2 Your responsibilities

As a member, parent/carer, or volunteer of the club, we expect you to set standards for general behaviour and conduct which are important to the Club, other members, affiliates, and the sport as a whole.

In the interests of fostering the right culture, we expect all members, parents/carers, and volunteers to understand, embrace, act out, and advocate their general responsibilities laid out in this document.

To that end, we ask all members, parents/carers, and volunteers to sign up to their commitments:



- **Code of Conduct for children**
- **Code of Conduct for Parents and Carers**
- **Code of Conduct for Coaches, Swimming Teachers & Lifeguards**
- **Code of Conduct for Committee Members, Officials & Volunteers**

Anyone involved in the club can contact the Swim England Child safeguarding team, Swimline, County or Regional welfare officer or the Swim England Legal department for advice or guidance. If these services are not available and there is concern that immediate action is needed to protect a child from harm the police or social care can be contacted.

4.3 BNSC Child Safeguarding Policies

For convenience, BNSC Policies and Procedures are created as individual documents so that they can be referenced and printed separately.

- Contact Details
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Changing Room Policy
- Late Collection of Children Policy
- Photography and Video Policy
- Transport Policy
- Missing Child Policy
- Whistle-blowing Policy
- Indecent/ child abuse images policy
- Supervision when away from the organisation policy
- Online contact and electronic communication with children policy
- Guidance for lane sharing between children and adults
- Safe recruitment policy

5 Reacting to, recording and reporting concerns

5.1 Key Contact Details

You can find key contact information, including emergency contact details, on Swim Club Manager, club document **BNSC Contact Details** (under Policy section).

5.2 What to do

If you have any reason to be concerned about a member of the club, then the club urges you to act. The club follows Swim England guidance to: React, Record and Report.

Stage 1: **React** to the concern, disclosure, suspicion or allegation in a timely and appropriate manner.

Stage 2: **Record** the relevant information.



Stage 3: **Report** the information to the appropriate person(s) and/or organisation(s).

This process is appropriate in all cases, including when it is an emergency. **The club's first contact to report concerns is the welfare officer.**

For more information on each of these stages and an appropriate response, see Swim England's Wavepower,

Section 2

- 2.1 Building a safer culture
- 2.2 Safeguarding children
- 2.3 Reporting a concern about a child at risk of harm
- 2.4 Adult safeguarding
- 2.5 Reporting a concern about an adult at risk of harm



5.3 Advice and Complaints

If you need advice or guidance regarding safeguarding or this policy, first contact the club's welfare officer.

If you have a complaint about the club, coaching or committee, whether related to Welfare or otherwise, then please read the **BNSC Complaints Procedure** for full details of what to do.

5.4 Sanctions, punishment, and appeal

Failure of swimmers to comply with these codes of conduct and policies will result in the appropriate disciplinary action.

1. A verbal warning is the first stage, issued by the Head Coach.
2. Following this a written letter from the committee to advise parents of the concern.
3. If this is ineffective the following actions will follow:
 - a) Temporary exclusion
 - b) Written warning
 - c) Membership Withdrawal

In accordance with the Club's constitution, only the Committee can ultimately withdraw the membership of a swimmer - a decision not taken lightly but taken in the interests of the safety and well-being of the swimmers and club as a whole.

Serious incidents will be reported to Swim England in accordance with Swim England guidelines.

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