

Tidal Swim Club: Safeguarding Policy - Twyford



Date of Assessment: 01/02/2025

Assessor Name: Michael Brackstone, Director and DSL

Reviewed By: Niamh Wilkinson Director and CEO

Next Review Date: 01/02/2026

1. Introduction

Tidal Swim Club is committed to ensuring the safety, well-being, and protection of all its members, particularly young swimmers, within a safe and supportive environment. This safeguarding policy aims to provide clear guidance to staff, volunteers, swimmers, and parents/guardians on the procedures and actions necessary to safeguard children and vulnerable individuals involved in the club's activities.

2. Objectives

- To prevent harm, abuse, and exploitation of young swimmers and vulnerable individuals.
- To create a safe and positive environment for all members, where everyone feels valued, respected, and supported.
- To ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding young swimmers.
- To outline the procedures for reporting and responding to concerns of abuse or neglect.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all members, staff, volunteers, and contractors involved with Tidal Swim Club, including those who have direct contact with children and vulnerable individuals during club activities, events, or competitions.

4. Principles of Safeguarding

- **Respect and Dignity:** Treat all children, young people, and vulnerable adults with respect and dignity.
- **Zero Tolerance to Abuse:** Tidal Swim Club has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of abuse or misconduct.
- **Promotion of Well-Being:** The club is committed to promoting the well-being of all its members and ensuring their emotional, physical, and social development.
- **Empowerment:** Children and vulnerable adults will be encouraged to voice concerns and report any issues without fear of retaliation.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Safeguarding Officer

Tidal Swim Club has appointed a designated Safeguarding Officer (Michael Brackstone) who is responsible for overseeing all safeguarding issues and ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively. The Safeguarding Officer will be the primary contact for any safeguarding concerns and will ensure that appropriate actions are taken when a concern is raised.

5.2 Coaches, Volunteers, and Staff

- Ensure that all young swimmers are treated with care, respect, and dignity.

- Be aware of the club's safeguarding policy and follow the procedures when responding to safeguarding concerns.
- Attend safeguarding training and remain up to date with relevant policies and legislation.
- Report any concerns about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult to the Safeguarding Officer immediately.

5.3 Parents/Guardians

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate openly with the club and keep the club informed of any concerns they may have regarding their child's safety or well-being.
- Parents/guardians must adhere to the club's code of conduct and ensure that their child is aware of the importance of safeguarding and safety during training sessions and competitions.

6. Procedures for Reporting Concerns

6.1 Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Any concerns regarding the welfare of a swimmer, whether observed during training, at events, or in other circumstances, must be reported immediately to the designated Safeguarding Officer. The report will be handled confidentially and in line with the club's safeguarding procedures.

Concerns may be related to:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse or exploitation
- Neglect
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination

6.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times, except where there is a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with relevant laws and policies.

6.3 External Reporting

If the Safeguarding Officer believes that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of significant harm, they will report the concern to the relevant authorities (e.g., local children's services or the police) in line with local safeguarding procedures.

7. Safe Recruitment and Training

- All coaches, staff, and volunteers will undergo a rigorous recruitment process, including background checks (e.g., Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks or equivalent) before being allowed to work with children or vulnerable individuals.
- All staff and volunteers will undergo safeguarding training, including recognizing the signs of abuse, reporting procedures, and creating a safe environment for children.

8. Code of Conduct

The Tidal Swim Club has developed a Code of Conduct, which all members, staff, and volunteers are expected to follow. This includes:

- Treating all individuals with respect and fairness.
- Maintaining appropriate boundaries with swimmers.
- Ensuring that there is no physical, emotional, or verbal abuse.
- Not using inappropriate or abusive language.
- Not engaging in any form of discriminatory behaviour.
- Not engaging in physical contact with swimmers unless necessary for their safety or well-being.

9. Training and Education

Tidal Swim Club will provide ongoing safeguarding training for all coaches, staff, volunteers, and members. This will include:

- Basic awareness of safeguarding principles.
- Recognising signs of abuse or neglect.
- Responding appropriately to disclosures.
- Understanding the importance of maintaining a safe, supportive environment.

10. Review and Monitoring

This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually or in response to any incidents or changes in legislation or best practice guidelines. Regular audits will be conducted to ensure compliance with the policy, and improvements will be made where necessary.

11. Behavioural Concerns, Thresholds for Reporting & Duty to Refer

Tidal Swim Club is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of all children and young people who attend our sessions. In line with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)** and **Swim England's Wavepower**, the club has a statutory duty to report concerns that may indicate a child is at risk of harm, neglect, or abuse. This duty applies regardless of whether the behaviour or concerns arise from children, parents/guardians, or others present at club activities.

11.1 Concerning Behaviour by Children or Parents/Guardians

The following behaviours may indicate that a child or parent/guardian poses a risk to themselves or others. These will be documented and escalated appropriately:

- Persistent or escalating **aggressive, threatening, or violent behaviour**
- **Verbally abusive or intimidating behaviour** towards staff, volunteers, swimmers, or other families
- Behaviour that **disrupts the safety** of the pool environment or prevents sessions from running safely
- **Refusal to follow safety instructions**, including those required for the safe use of the pool

- Situations where **physical restraint** becomes necessary to safely remove a child or adult from poolside to prevent harm

If behaviour of this nature compromises safety or wellbeing, Tidal Swim Club may be required to make a referral to **Children's Social Care, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**, or the police as appropriate.

11.2 Indicators of Possible Abuse or Neglect

In accordance with KCSIE and Wavepower, staff must remain vigilant for signs that a child may be suffering or at risk of suffering harm. Concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- **Unexplained bruises, injuries, burns, or marks**
- **Inconsistent explanations** for injuries or visible discomfort
- **Signs of neglect** such as malnourishment, poor hygiene, persistent uncleanliness, or inappropriate clothing
- Children who appear withdrawn, fearful, unusually aggressive, or showing sudden behavioural changes
- **Disclosures** made by a child or parent that raise safeguarding concerns
- Observations of **inappropriate physical contact**, sexualised behaviour, or concerning comments
- Repeated failure by parents/guardians to provide adequate supervision or ensure a safe environment

Any such indicators must be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Officer.

11.3 Use of Physical Intervention or Restraint

Physical intervention is **only permitted** when it is reasonable and necessary to prevent immediate harm—for example:

- Preventing a child from entering deep water unsafely
- Stopping a child or adult from causing injury to themselves or others
- Safely removing an individual from poolside when behaviour presents a danger to themselves or others

All incidents requiring physical restraint will be **fully recorded**, reviewed, and may lead to safeguarding referrals if the circumstances raise concerns about underlying neglect, abuse, or environmental risk.

11.4 Duty to Report and Thresholds for Referral

Tidal Swim Club is legally required to act if there is:

- Reasonable cause to suspect a child is **suffering or likely to suffer significant harm**
- Concern that a parent's behaviour poses a **risk to their child or others**
- Evidence or suspicion of **abuse, neglect, or exploitation**
- Behaviour requiring physical intervention that raises safeguarding questions

In such cases, the Safeguarding Officer will follow the procedures outlined in:

- **KCSIE statutory guidance**
- **Swim England Wavepower**
- Local safeguarding partnership procedures

This may involve referral to:

- **Children's Social Care**
- **Police**
- **LADO** (if the concern involves an adult posing a risk to children)

Parental consent is **not required** for a referral if doing so would increase risk to the child.

11.5 Communication With Parents/Guardians

Where appropriate and safe:

- Parents will be informed of concerns raised about their child
- The club will work collaboratively with families to reduce risks and support positive behaviour
- However, if informing a parent could place a child at further risk, the club will follow statutory safeguarding guidance and **not** inform the parent until advised by safeguarding authorities

11.6 Risks to Staff: Abuse, Harassment, and Accidental Harm

Tidal Swim Club has a duty of care not only to its swimmers but also to its staff and volunteers. In line with KCSIE and Swim England's Wavepower, the club will not tolerate any behaviour that places staff at risk of

physical or emotional harm. All staff have the right to work in an environment that is safe, respectful, and free from abuse or intimidation.

11.6.1 Verbal Abuse or Harassment

The following behaviours towards staff are considered safeguarding and welfare concerns and may lead to immediate action, including removal from the premises and referral to external agencies:

- Shouting, swearing, or using aggressive or threatening language
- Intimidation, harassment, or attempts to provoke staff
- Abusive or confrontational behaviour that disrupts the safety of the environment
- Repeated disrespectful communication, whether in person, by phone, email, or social media

Verbal abuse will be recorded and escalated to the Safeguarding Officer. If such behaviour poses a risk to children, staff, or others, a referral to Children's Social Care or the police may be made.

11.6.2 Physical Abuse or Threats of Violence

Any behaviour that includes or implies physical harm will be treated extremely seriously. This includes:

- Attempting to strike, push, grab, or physically intimidate staff
- Throwing objects or using items in a way that could cause harm
- Entering prohibited areas or refusing to leave when instructed for safety reasons
- Physical restraint becoming necessary to prevent harm

Incidents of physical aggression will be logged, reviewed, and referred to the police or safeguarding authorities where appropriate.

11.6.3 Accidental Risk to Staff

Due to the nature of swimming environments, staff may also face accidental risks caused by parents or children failing to follow safety guidance. Examples include:

- Children running on poolside and colliding with staff
- Parents entering wet or restricted areas and causing slips or falls
- Ignoring safety instructions that result in avoidable hazards
- Handling or lifting children unpredictably in ways that risk injury to staff

Where accidental risk occurs due to persistent unsafe behaviour or negligence, the club may treat this as a safeguarding concern and escalate accordingly.

11.6.4 Safeguarding Responses

Where behaviour towards staff—whether intentional or accidental—indicates risk or neglect within the family environment, or creates an unsafe setting for children, the club may:

- Issue formal warnings or behaviour agreements
- Remove individuals from sessions or from club membership
- Refer concerns to Children's Social Care if a child's behaviour indicates unmet needs or risk at home
- Refer to the police if staff safety is compromised
- Escalate concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if allegations involve risk to children

Protecting staff from harm contributes directly to safeguarding children, as unsafe behaviour from adults or children often signals wider concerns about welfare, supervision, boundaries, or home environment.

12. Conclusion

Tidal Swim Club is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all its members. By working together, we can ensure that children, young people, and vulnerable adults involved in the club's activities are protected from harm and are able to enjoy swimming in a safe, fun, and welcoming environment.

Sign-Off

Assessor Name: Michael Brackstone Director and DSL

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Date: 01/02/2025

Reviewed By: Niamh Wilkinson Director and CEO

Signature: N.Wilkinson

Date: 01/02/2025