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Forewords



Adam Paker

Chief Executive Officer – The ASA

Swimming is a wonderful activity, especially for young people. It allows them the opportunity to have fun with their friends while learning new skills, staying healthy and achieving goals.

It is also a vital skill that saves lives. The ASA is committed to ensuring that all children and young people are able to enjoy aquatics – whether swimming, diving, water polo or synchronised swimming – in a safe and fun environment.

This updated version of Wavepower once again includes the valuable feedback from young people involved in our sport, via the excellent ASA Youth Forum. It also includes a particular emphasis on the impact of new technology and the increasing use of social media, which is reflected in our guidance and policies. Everyone involved in sport has a

responsibility to ensure that children and young people are able to enjoy themselves in a safe and non-threatening environment. Wavepower provides comprehensive guidance for coaches, teachers, parents, young people and all those involved in the running of clubs, but it is also important that we continue to listen to children and young people and act immediately on any concerns that are raised.

I would urge everyone involved in our sport to read the enclosed information and ensure they are aware of our policies so that together we continue to build a safe environment for our young people.





Anne Tiivas

Director – NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit

Wavepower is an essential resource for everyone who is involved in providing a safe and enjoyable environment for young swimmers, divers, water polo players, synchronised swimmers, and for young volunteers in the sport. It helps everyone to understand their roles and responsibilities to safeguard and protect all our children and young people.

This new version of Wavepower takes account of changes in legislation, government guidance and learning from practice in swimming, in other sports and trends in the wider world of safeguarding children.

Child protection has been a constant focus of public attention in the last couple of years due to the high profile cases of abuse in institutions and by public figures. The NSPCC's How Safe are our Children report for 2014-2015 has shown a huge increase in referrals to statutory agencies and to our child and adult helplines. This reflects the rise in awareness of the extent and nature of abuse which our children and young people are exposed to. It is everybody's responsibility to ensure that our children are safe and able to reach their potential in life. Sports people play a key role in contributing to this.

The consistent message from inquiry reports into the abuse of children is that we need to listen more to

children and young people and act on what they tell us. The role of the ASA Youth Forum continues to be really important in this respect. However we also need to ensure that everyone involved in clubs, swimming, all aquatic sports activities and competitions has the knowledge and confidence to be able to identify children who are experiencing difficulty within or outside of the aquatic environment and to respond appropriately. Wavepower is an essential toolkit which contributes to these aims. The ASA also invests in safeguarding training to support safeguards being put in place in practice.

We know that young people are experiencing new challenges in their daily lives. For instance we are aware of the increase in reported mental health issues such as self-harm and eating disorders. Cases involving inappropriate use of technology by adults and young people are also increasing. The ASA has provided new information in this resource to help staff and volunteers to respond appropriately to these concerns. The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit commends the ASA for its work on this new version of Wavepower. It will help to provide confidence to parents and young participants that the ASA continues to demonstrate its commitment to providing safe and enjoyable swimming and aquatic environments.



Introduction

Wavepower 2016–19 is the new Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures publication which replaces all previous versions.

The ASA has produced Wavepower to assist in safeguarding and protecting all children in aquatics. Wavepower is the ASA Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures publication and as such, must be adopted by all ASA affiliated aquatics clubs and organisations.

Although Wavepower is primarily aimed at ASA affiliated clubs, it can also be utilised by swim schools and other related organisations, events or activities where appropriate. If you are reading this document, but do not consider your organisation to be a club, please apply the guidance to your own particular scenario. The word ‘club’ or ‘organisation’ will be used henceforth as a general term, to refer to any ASA affiliated club, swim school, event or activity, unless otherwise stated. Similarly, the word ‘member’ will be used to refer to any child or young person who is a member of an ASA affiliated organisation, be that a club, swim school or other related organisation across all aquatic disciplines. For the avoidance of doubt, a ‘young person’ is anyone under the age of 18.

The aim of Wavepower is to safeguard all children in line with current child safeguarding legislation and guidance and is for use within any ASA-related organisation where children are present. Wavepower consistently emphasises that the responsibility for child safeguarding in our organisations belongs with all those involved in the sport and is not the sole responsibility of any one person at local, county or national level.

Wavepower provides comprehensive information in one document for officers, members, members’ parents and any other individual involved in aquatics. It is subdivided into specific sections to make it concise, straightforward and easy to use. The ASA will be updating the publication as and when required and we always welcome feedback from users.

The welfare officer, or the equivalent in each organisation, will be the person most likely to use the guidance in Wavepower and it is they who will be responsible for holding and maintaining the publication. They will be expected to make Wavepower available to all individuals who request to consult it and to pass it on to the new welfare officer should they resign their position.

The welfare officer or equivalent will find this publication helpful in guiding them to plan, prioritise and implement the various safeguarding activities that are necessary to protect children within aquatics.

The aim of such a comprehensive publication is to enable everyone in aquatics to play their part in safeguarding children. It offers practical guidance for those who are directly involved in aquatics with children, providing information on mandatory requirements and good practice.

Wavepower is also relevant to our county and regional members and a copy will be made available to all county and regional welfare officers.

This document will be fully updated in 2020, but when significant changes take place either in ASA policy and guidance or through statute or governmental guidance, the welfare officer will be sent additional or replacement pages. It is the responsibility of the welfare officer to keep the publication updated.

The information sheet and emergency contact details, which can be found at the front of Wavepower, contains the contact details for various child protection agencies which can be used either in an emergency or as a matter of course, and should be completed by the welfare officer on receipt of this publication. Please contact the ASA Child Safeguarding Team if you are unsure of how to find any of these contact details and would like some assistance. Welfare officers and members may also contact the ASA Signposting Helpdesk if they have a problem or concern and are unsure on whom to ask for help.



The ASA Child Safeguarding Policy

The ASA Vision for Swimming in Britain (2013) states that sport in general is recognised as being beneficial to the nation's health and wellbeing. Swimming is a crucial life skill and anyone of any age or ability can participate. This vision is based on the belief that swimming and aquatics is, and should remain, accessible to all, regardless of age, gender, faith or religion, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, background, economic position, disability or level of ability. As such, the ASA Child Safeguarding Policy is applicable to anyone involved in aquatics, irrespective of their background.

Safeguarding children in aquatics

Safeguarding in aquatics is based upon the provision of an appropriate environment that is tailored to the needs and requirements of all children.

The ASA believes that all children involved in its organisations have the right to stay safe and have fun. Sport develops physical skills, self-esteem and the ability to be a team player, as well as providing an opportunity to achieve individual success.

Safeguarding children in your organisation should be an integral part of your activities and is about creating a culture that provides a safe and happy environment in which children can learn to swim and develop to a level appropriate for their ability. Aquatic sports should be enjoyable and fun, including the competitive aspect at whatever level undertaken, giving each individual a sense of achievement and satisfaction from taking part.

The ASA is committed to ensuring that all children who participate in ASA activities are able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be safeguarded from harm. It is the staff, officers, volunteers, clubs, swim schools, counties and regions who will ensure safeguarding at a local level.

Responsibility to safeguard children

The Children Acts (1989 and 2004) and the publication *Working together to safeguard children (2015)* from the Department for Education are clear that safeguarding children is the responsibility of all, including those who work with children in whatever capacity. It is the organisation's responsibility, through good recruitment practice, to ensure that those who are deemed to be unsuitable to work with children are not allowed to do so in our sport. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is an important, but not sole, part of safe recruitment.

The ASA acknowledges, and requires affiliated organisations to acknowledge, that they have a duty of care to safeguard children from harm. Organisations and their members must follow the guidance in this document to safeguard children from harm and act appropriately if a child is identified as being at risk of harm.

The key principles of *Working together to safeguard children (2015)* are:

- **safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:** for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
- **a child-centred approach:** for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

- Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe; this includes teachers and coaches and all who are employed or volunteer to work with children in the sport sector.
- No single individual can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
- In order that organisations and practitioners collaborate effectively, it is vital that every individual working with children and families is aware of the role that they have to play and the role of other professionals. In addition, effective safeguarding requires clear local arrangements for collaboration between professionals and agencies.



- Any professional with a concern about a child's welfare should make a referral to Children's Services. Professionals should follow up their concerns if they are not satisfied with the response.
- *Working together to safeguard children (2015)* sets out the key roles for individual organisations and key elements of effective local arrangements for safeguarding. It is very important these arrangements are strongly led and promoted at a local level.

A child-centred approach

Effective safeguarding systems are child-centred. Failings in safeguarding systems are too often the result of losing sight of the needs and views of the children within them, or placing the interests of adults ahead of the needs of children.

Children have said that they need:

- **Vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them.
- **Understanding and action:** to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon.
- **Stability:** to be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them.
- **Respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not.
- **Information and engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans.
- **Explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response.
- **Support:** to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family.
- **Advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views.

For more information, please read the full document at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2.

Key principles

- The ASA is committed to ensuring that all children who take part in ASA activities are able to 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.
- The ASA recognises the responsibilities of the statutory agencies and is committed to complying with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures and the statutory guidance *Working together to safeguard children (2015)*.
- Confidentiality will be maintained appropriately at all times and the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration when making decisions on whether or not to share information about them.
- The ASA will support all adults involved in the sport to understand their roles and responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and protecting children in the sport.
- The ASA 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, young individuals, and all participants involved in the sport can access advice and guidance on child welfare matters from the ASA Child Safeguarding and Legal Affairs Team, the ASA/NSPCC Swimline Child Protection helpline or from the statutory agencies.
- All ASA organisations must adopt Wavepower and ensure that, when they receive new information, the publication is updated as appropriate.



The ASA commitment

The ASA is committed to working in partnership with the statutory agencies to enable them to carry out their duties to investigate each concern and protect all children from harm. To enable this to happen, the ASA is developing closer links with the LSCBs, Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs – also known as DOs) and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) teams.

The ASA is also committed to developing policies and procedures to assist organisations in safeguarding children by linking with professional associations including the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU).

In addition to this, the ASA actively promotes the resources of Kidscape, the national anti-bullying charity, adapting the Kidscape anti-bullying policy to further strengthen our commitment to preventing and dealing with bullying in our clubs.

Acknowledgements

The ASA has drawn from the work of a number of organisations during the production of Wavepower 2016–19 and would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their support and their kind permission for the use and adaptation of materials:

ASA Youth Forum

ASA National Volunteer Forum

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit

The Football Association

Members of the British Swimming
World Class Operations

British Swimming Coaches Association

Kidscape

selfharmUK

Dr A Connor, County Welfare Officer

The ASA would also like to thank and acknowledge welfare officers, coaching staff, parents, members, volunteers and all those who work with children and young people in our clubs for their ideas and feedback on the content of Wavepower.



Key definitions

Key definitions and concepts shown below are taken from *Working together to safeguard children (2015)*. This is a guide to inter-agency collaboration to safeguard and promote the welfare of children produced by the Department for Education.

Abuse	For definitions of the different types of abuse and some common indicators, please see pp. 30–33.
Child	<p>A ‘child’ is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. ‘Children’ means children and young people throughout.</p> <p>The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, in prison or a young offenders’ institution, does not change his, or her, status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Acts of 1989 and 2004.</p>
Child protection	<p>Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm as a result of maltreatment.</p> <p>Effective child protection is essential as part of the wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should be proactive in safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.</p>
Children’s Services	This may also be known as Social Services or Children’s Social Care Team (the name may vary around the country).
Key concept: Who is responsible for safeguarding?	<i>Working together to safeguard children (2015)</i> states that Local Authorities have overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in the area. Whilst local authorities play a lead role, safeguarding children and protecting them from harm is everyone’s responsibility. Anyone who comes into contact with children or families has a role to play.
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team	Usually a secure co-located information hub of Children’s Services, Police, Health, Probation, Education, Mental Health and other agencies who enable secure information to be shared between agencies to determine best outcomes, following any referral of concerns about a child.
Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	<p>For the purposes of this guidance this is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting children from maltreatment. • Preventing impairment of children’s health or development. • Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. • Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.



Key abbreviations

ASA	Amateur Swimming Association
BS	British Swimming
CPSU	Child Protection in Sport Unit
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
ICPO	ASA Independent Child Protection Officer
IoS	Institute of Swimming
ISA	Independent Safeguarding Authority
LAD	ASA Legal Affairs Department
LADO (aka DO)	Local Authority Designated Officer (England only) also known as a Designated Officer
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
NCSC	ASA National Child Safeguarding Coordinator
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

