

Crawley Swimming Club: Guidance on Lane Sharing Between Adults and Children



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Compliance Framework: Wavepower 2025 (Version 2.1)

1. Policy Statement & Scope

Crawley Swimming Club (CSC) and Swim England recognise that aquatic sports are physical activities with inherent risks. We are fully committed to keeping risks to all members to an absolute minimum.

Swim England recognises that children (under 18) and adults (18 and over) may train together if they are of a similar competitive standard. While separating adult and youth training is preferred when possible, co-training is often necessary due to limited facility lane availability, the transitional development of older youth athletes, or to provide an appropriate competitive mix that can actively discourage peer-on-peer bullying.

When adults and children share lanes, CSC and its coaching staff hold a strict duty of care to ensure a safe, positive, and secure training environment.

2. Mandatory Coaching Risk Assessment Factors

Whenever lane sharing between adults and children occurs, CSC coaches must conduct an ongoing risk assessment. Particular attention must be given to the mix of swimmers in each lane, factoring in the following parameters:

- **Supervision Suitability:** Ensuring appropriate and alert poolside supervision by qualified club coaches and officials during all sessions involving under-18s.
- **Lifeguard Presence:** Verifying the active presence of facility lifeguards during the session.
- **Athlete Profiles:** Assessing the specific ages, sexes, relative physical sizes, and swimming abilities of all athletes in the lane.
- **Technical Competence:** Monitoring the lane discipline, spatial awareness, and stroke precision of individual swimmers to prevent accidental collisions.
- **Lane Logistics:** Evaluating the specific width of each training lane and restricting the total number of swimmers permitted in a single lane to maintain safe spacing.
- **Visibility:** Confirming whether the training session is open to spectators, which enhances environment transparency.

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- **Welfare Access:** Ensuring the club has a clearly publicised process by which any athlete or parent can immediately raise concerns with the Club Welfare Officer.

3. Rules of Engagement and Lane Etiquette

To prevent accidental physical contact—which can cause distress or be misinterpreted—all swimmers must strictly adhere to the following lane discipline:

- **Directional Flow:** Swimmers must strictly follow the clockwise or counter-clockwise parameters established by the coach for that specific lane.
- **Overtaking Rules:** Overtaking must only be done if it can be executed safely and cleanly without impeding another swimmer's stroke or causing aggressive physical contact.
- **Turning Space:** Swimmers must tuck tightly to the wall when resting at the end of a lane to leave the center of the wall entirely clear for turning swimmers.
- **Intentional Misconduct:** Any intentional physical aggression, striking, or inappropriate touching under the guise of training will bypass standard disciplinary warnings and be treated as a severe welfare violation.

4. Statutory Regulations and DBS Clarification

- **DBS Requirements:** In strict compliance with Swim England regulations, adult club members who are simply training or warming up in a shared lane with junior swimmers **do not require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check** solely for sharing lane space. A DBS check is only mandatory if the adult is operating in an eligible, official capacity on behalf of the club (such as a coach, team manager, or official).
- **Changing Facilities:** When adults and children utilise the leisure center changing spaces before or after a shared session, they must strictly adhere to the CSC Changing Rooms and Athlete Supervision Policy, which prohibits adults from entering changing cubicles with un-related youth athletes and enforces an absolute ban on mobile devices.

5. Reporting Concerns

While rare, Swim England notes that mixed-age lanes can occasionally result in allegations of physical or sexual assault, whether accidental or intentional. CSC takes any such allegation with utmost seriousness.

If a swimmer experiences or witnesses any uncomfortable behaviour, inappropriate touching, or aggressive lane misconduct, it must be reported immediately:

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- **On Poolside:** Inform the lead coach on duty immediately so they can adjust lane assignments or halt the session.
- **To Welfare:** Formally report any lingering or serious concerns to the Club Welfare Officer.

Welfare Contact Information

- **Club Welfare Officer Email:** welfare@crawleysc.co.uk