

Crawley Swimming Club: Safeguarding and Welfare Policy



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Compliance Framework: Wavepower 2025 (Version 2.1)

1. Policy Statement

Crawley Swimming Club is fully committed to creating a culture where everyone feels protected, included, and welcomed. The safety, well-being, and protection of all children, young people, and adults at risk are our highest priorities. The Club completely adopts and implements the mandatory regulations set out in Swim England's Wavepower safeguarding policy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All club-sanctioned activities, including training sessions, camp environments, and competitions.
- All members, swimmers, parents/guardians, coaches, teachers, team managers, officials, volunteers, trustees, employees, and third-party contractors.

3. Core Principles

To maintain a safe environment, Crawley Swimming Club strictly enforces the following principles:

- **Positive Environment:** Creating an atmosphere that celebrates diversity and ensures no member is discriminated against.
- **Active Listening:** Ensuring that children and adults are listened to and that their welfare concerns are taken seriously.
- **Safer Recruitment:** Executing robust background checks, references, and verification for all roles.
- **Prompt Action:** Responding immediately and professionally to all welfare or safeguarding concerns.
- **Confidentiality:** Maintaining strict "need-to-know" confidentiality and storing electronic and physical records securely.
- **Officer Independence:** Keeping safeguarding pathways entirely separate from general club administration and governance to avoid conflicts of interest.
- **Weighing Athletes:** in line with Swim England's Weighing Athletes policy, athletes under the age of 18 must not be weighed unless they are on a nationally supported talent pathway delivered by the national governing body, with access to appropriate nutrition, medical and sports science support.

4. Definitions

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The club strictly adheres to the legal and operational definitions outlined in Wavepower regarding:

- Child and Adult Safeguarding: Protecting an individual's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- Abuse Types: Zero tolerance for physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, neglect, bullying, cyber-bullying, and harassment.
- Poor Practice: Any behaviour by an adult or peer that falls below the club's high standard of ethics but does not immediately cross the threshold of abuse.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Welfare Officer (or Welfare Team)

- Serves as the primary, independent contact for all safeguarding and child protection matters.
- Must remain completely independent of the Trustees and the Executive Committee to eliminate conflicts of interest.
- Receives, reviews, and manages all safeguarding reports and welfare concerns.
- Liaises directly with the Swim England Safeguarding Team, local authorities, and statutory agencies.
- Secures and maintains confidential safeguarding case records.

5.2 Appointment Criteria for the Welfare Officer

In line with Wavepower, the Welfare Officer must be someone who:

- is able to act independently and in the best interests of the child or adult at risk;
- is not an active teacher or coach at the Club;
- is not related to, or in a relationship with, an active teacher or coach at the Club;
- is not related to, or in a relationship with, the Chair of the Club Committee;
- is able to attend the Club frequently;
- has the time to fulfil the role and is prepared to complete all of its core tasks;
- can satisfy the core skills and knowledge required for the role; is prepared to undergo the training required;
- is an adult.

The names and contact details of the Welfare Officer(s) are published to all members. The Welfare Officer's email address is a dedicated club address, not a personal account, and clearly identifies both the role and the Club (welfare@crawleysc.co.uk). Access credentials and multi-factor authentication details change whenever the postholder changes.

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Should a conflict of interest arise, the Welfare Officer must contact the county officer, regional team or Swim England directly to seek further advice.

5.3 Parent Liaison Officer

- Serves as the first point of contact for all non-welfare complaints, administrative disputes, and club grievances.
- Ensures a clear line of communication and guarantees that any hidden welfare or safeguarding elements are immediately routed directly to the Welfare Officer.

5.4 Trustees

- Provide overall legal oversight and governance for Crawley Swimming Club.
- Ensure the club remains compliant with all statutory regulations and Swim England minimum affiliation standards.

5.5 Chair & Vice Chairs

- Jointly verify and confirm the appointment of any Welfare Officer to ensure they are not closely related to, or in a personal relationship with, key club figures (e.g., the Chairs or the Head Coach).
- Oversee the non-welfare disciplinary pathways of the club.
- Actively support the Welfare Team by ensuring they have the operational resources required to execute their duties.

6. Safer Recruitment Protocols

- Before any volunteer, employee, or contractor is permitted to work with club members, they must complete our safer recruitment pipeline:
- DBS Checks: A valid, enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check, renewable every three years.
- Role Verification: Clear, written role descriptions alongside verified personal and professional references.
- Interviews: Formal face-to-face or digital interviews to assess suitability for working with young people.
- Compliance: Full compliance with Swim England registration and licensing standards prior to poolside access.

7. Mandatory Training Requirements

- Safeguarding Courses: All coaches, teachers, committee members, team managers, and regular volunteers must complete Swim England-approved safeguarding training every three years.
- Time to Listen (TTL): All appointed Welfare Officers must additionally complete the mandatory Time to Listen training session to hold office.

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8. Changing Rooms & Photography Policy

- Digital Device Ban: An absolute and total ban on the use of mobile phones, tablets, or any other digital device capable of capturing images is enforced inside changing areas at all times.
- Photography Regulation: Photography and video recording during any club training session or event is strictly governed by Wavepower guidance. Filming during training is prohibited unless there is a legitimate technical need (e.g., stroke analysis) and explicit, written parental consent has been secured.
- Mandatory Reporting: All club members have a duty to immediately report any unauthorised photography, recording, or digital device use in changing areas to the Welfare Officer.

9. Reporting Safeguarding and Welfare Concerns

If you suspect a child or adult at risk is suffering from abuse, neglect, or poor practice — or if a member makes a disclosure to you:

1. Do not investigate the matter yourself.
2. Report it immediately and directly to the Crawley SC Welfare Officer.
3. If a child or adult is in immediate physical danger, contact emergency services (999) first, then notify the Welfare Officer.

10. Reporting Non-Welfare Complaints

For issues that do not involve safeguarding, child protection, or welfare (e.g., squad selection disputes, fee queries, or administrative disagreements): • Complaints must be submitted in writing directly to the Parent Liaison Officer.

11. Investigation of Non-Welfare Complaints

- All non-welfare disputes submitted to the Parent Liaison Officer will be handled in a fair, confidential, and prompt manner.
- Investigations and hearings will be executed in full compliance with the Club's Complaints, Disputes, and Grievance Policy.

12. Mandatory Dispute Resolution (Swim England Rule)

In strict alignment with Wavepower 2025 (Section 4), the club enforces Swim England's overarching dispute rules:

"Any dispute within the club or alleged breach of a club's rules (including its Codes of Conduct) will be resolved through the Club Complaints procedure detailed within Regulation 107 of the Swim England Handbook."

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13. Record-Keeping and Data Security

- General Club records are managed in line with UK GDPR and the Club's Data Protection Suite.
- Safeguarding files, case notes, and welfare reports are kept entirely separate from general Club records, under the Club's safeguarding information firewall, accessible only to the Welfare Officer(s).
- The current technical storage model (SharePoint online-only, encrypted at rest, passkey multi-factor authentication) is set out in the Safeguarding and Welfare DPIA and the Confidentiality Policy.

14. Policy Review

This policy is a living document. It will be reviewed automatically on an annual basis, or immediately upon the release of any updated regulations, directives, or editions of Swim England's Wavepower.