



Platypus Swimming Club

Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy and Procedures

Policy Version: 1.0

Date Approved: 17th November 2025

Next Review Due: November 2026

Approved by: Platypus Swimming Club Committee

Introduction

Platypus Swimming Club is a community-run club that provides a safe, inclusive, and positive environment where all children and young people can enjoy swimming and club activities free from harm, abuse, or neglect.

We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of every child, recognising that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, have the right to participate in sport in a safe and supportive environment.

This policy outlines the Club's safeguarding commitments and provides clear guidance for all carers, volunteers, and committee members on how to respond if a concern arises.

Club Safeguarding/Welfare team:

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Policy Statement

Platypus Swimming Club aims to provide a safe, inclusive, and positive environment for everyone. We are committed to:

- Safeguarding the welfare of all children under the age of 18, including those with additional vulnerabilities or disabilities
- Preventing all forms of abuse, neglect, and poor practice
- Acting promptly and responsibly if concerns are raised

We recognise our duty of care — to do everything reasonably expected of us to protect individuals from harm and to respond appropriately to any concerns. While not all members may be able to share this responsibility directly, all carers, volunteers, and committee members do.

What is Child Safeguarding?

Child safeguarding means protecting children's right to grow up in a safe, supportive environment, free from abuse, neglect, and harm.

It applies to anyone under the age of 18 and includes:

- Promoting a culture where children feel safe, respected, and heard
- Preventing abuse, bullying, and poor practice

- Recognising signs of harm or risk
- Responding quickly and appropriately to concerns

All children, regardless of age, background, or ability, have the right to be protected from harm. Some children may be more vulnerable due to disability, communication needs, or past experiences — safeguarding must take account of these additional needs.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. At Platypus Swimming Club, this means creating an environment where children can enjoy the water with confidence, knowing that trusted adults are looking out for their safety and wellbeing.

Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Swim England's Wavepower Safeguarding Policy
- NSPCC and Ann Craft Trust guidance
- Local Safeguarding Children Partnership protocols

Definitions and Types of Abuse

Children may be at risk of one or more of the following:

- Physical abuse – causing physical harm
- Emotional abuse – persistent emotional maltreatment affecting development
- Sexual abuse – forcing or enticing a child into sexual activity
- Neglect – failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs
- Bullying and cyberbullying – including peer-on-peer abuse and online harm
- Child exploitation – including grooming, radicalisation, and criminal exploitation
- Harmful practices – such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- Exploitation can occur in a variety of ways, and the following are just some examples.

It is important that everyone is aware of the common signs of each type.

- Sexual exploitation
- Criminal exploitation
- Modern slavery/human trafficking
- Online exploitation
- Financial or Labour exploitation.

Communication and Awareness

- This policy is shared with all volunteers, carers, and committee members
- Safeguarding guidance is included in induction materials
- Key information is displayed on club notice boards and online platforms
- Everyone is encouraged to raise concerns without fear of reprisal

Code of Conduct

All club members, carers, and volunteers are expected to:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Prioritise the safety and wellbeing of others
- Report any safeguarding or wellbeing concerns to the Club's Safeguarding/Welfare team
- A separate Code of Conduct is maintained by the Club and shared with all individuals

Recognising & Reporting Abuse

If a child or at-risk adult is in immediate danger, you must call the Police on 999.

Except in situations of immediate danger, any instance of suspected or alleged abuse should be reported using the procedure below.

You do not need to be certain that abuse is taking place. If you are worried, you have a duty to act.

Do Not:

- Investigate the issue yourself
- Promise confidentiality to the person disclosing
- Confront the person alleged to be responsible

4.1 Initial Concerns

If you have concerns about any of our members, please raise this with the Club's safeguarding/welfare team. We will raise these concerns with their main carers in the first instance.

It is the carer's responsibility to manage these concerns thereafter.

- For carers working in a care home or supported living setting, they must act in line with their employer's safeguarding policy.
- Our members' welfare remains the responsibility of their carers.
- It is important that members do not feel they are "in trouble" or "causing trouble" when concerns are raised.

If there is a conflict of interest or the concern is about the main carer we will follow the referral procedure outlined in 4.4.

4.2 Escalating Concerns in Care Settings

If Platypus Swim Club continues to have concerns about a member living in a care home setting, and we are not confident that the main carer is acting appropriately, we will raise the concern directly with the care home management.

For members not in care settings (e.g., living with a parent or family carer), we will follow the referral procedure outlined in 4.4.

4.3 Ongoing Concerns

If concerns about a member's welfare continue or escalate, Platypus Swim Club will proceed with the formal referral process detailed in 4.4.

4.4 Making a Referral to Social Care

For Members under 18:

- Phone: Hertfordshire's Child protection and reporting concerns:
 - 24/7 → 0300 123 4043.
- Confirm in writing the same day:
 - Use the referral form available at [Hertfordshire Child Reporting Form](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/Hertfordshire-Child-Reporting-Form)
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/Hertfordshire-Child-Reporting-Form>

4.5 Record-Keeping and Follow-Up

- Make detailed written notes of all concerns, including:
 - What the child/adult said, verbatim if possible
 - Who you spoke to (name, role, and contact details)
 - The time and date of the report
 - Give this to the Club's safeguarding/welfare team.

For Club's safeguarding/welfare team:

- Clearly state that you expect an update within two working days.
- If no response is received within two working days, call again to request an update or outcome.
Record the time and date of your follow-up.
- If there is still no update after 72 hours, contact Hertfordshire's child protection helpline again and ask to speak to a manager.

Confidentiality

All safeguarding and welfare concerns will be handled sensitively and confidentially. Information will only be shared with relevant people, on a need-to-know basis, in accordance with data protection and safeguarding law.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if:

- There are changes in safeguarding legislation
- NASCH or another relevant body provides updated guidance
- An incident or concern prompts earlier review

