**Bristol Henleaze Swimming Club**

**Welfare Plan**



**2024**

# 1.Introduction

This Welfare Plan is designed to minimise the risks to children and young people taking part in the activities of Bristol Henleaze Swimming Club and to maximise their enjoyment and well-being.

In order to achieve this everyone who receives the Plan is required to read it carefully and to fulfil their respective responsibilities in order to ensure that the procedures are followed in a consistent and co-ordinated manner.

This plan recognises that Swim England already has a comprehensive Wavepower document ([https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/wavepower-child-safeguarding-for-clubs/#](https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/wavepower-child-safeguarding-for-clubs/)) in place to cover the welfare and duty of care requirements. This Plan is intended to supplement and not replace or reproduce those polices.

## Purpose of the Welfare Plan

The purpose of the Welfare Plan is to promote and ensure the wellbeing of the children and young people taking part in Bristol Henleaze Swimming Club activities. The Plan will also ensure that all those responsible for the welfare of children and young people will:

* Understand their safeguarding role and responsibilities
* Are suitably recruited, selected and trained to fulfil these
* Understand the procedures for responding to concerns about children’s welfare
* Are able to act on these appropriately and effectively

## Values and Principles

The Welfare Plan is underpinned by the following values and principles:

* The welfare of the swimmers and all young people is paramount
* All swimmers and young volunteers, whatever their age, gender, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs, sexual identity or disability, have equal rights to safety and protection against harm
* All suspicions, concerns or allegations of harm will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
* Safeguarding our children is everyone’s responsibility

# 2. Welfare Structure

The Welfare Panel consists of:

* Club Welfare Officer
* Head Coach / Chair
* Director

## Welfare Roles and Responsibilities

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Position** | **Training Required** | **Responsibility** |
| Jez Birds | Chair/MD | Safeguarding & Protecting Children | * Responsible for smooth running of the Club. * Chair of Welfare Panel * Ensure any welfare reports are included in meeting agendas * Hold a current and enhanced DBS check * Attend Safeguarding & Protecting Children training every 3 years. * Conform to all the requirements of the current Swim England Wavepower document |
| Liz Maddocks | Welfare Officer | Safeguarding & Protecting Children  Time to Listen | * Member of Welfare Panel * Provision of expertise, advice and support in safeguarding and protecting children and vulnerable adults in accordance with the Swim England current Wavepower document. * Attend committee meetings to report on welfare issues * Represent the club concerning welfare issues and liaise with Swim England and other relevant organisations on matters of concern * Ensure a detailed report is kept of all safeguarding issues reported to the club * Carry out and record all DBS checks, ensuring all staff hold a current DBS check * Ensure all staff have attended Safeguarding & Protecting Children course within the last 3 years and kept records and copies of certificates. * Hold a current enhanced DBS check * Attend Time to Listen course once and Safeguarding & Protecting Children training every 3 years. * Conform to all the requirements of the current Swim England Wavepower document. |
| Jez Birds | Head Coach | Safeguarding & Protecting Children | * Ensure requirements of the Welfare Plan are adhered to and refer any concerns to the Welfare Officer. * Conform to all the requirements of the current Swim England Wavepower document. * Ensure all accidents and incidents are recorded in the Club Accident and Incident Book and forward a copy to the Welfare Officer * Hold a current enhanced DBS check * Attend a Safeguarding & Protecting Children course every 3 years and forward copy certificate to the Welfare Officer. |
|  | Coaches | Safeguarding & Protecting Children  First Aid in Sport (advisable) | * Ensure the requirements of the Welfare Plan are adhered to and in conjunction with the Head Coach, report any concerns to the Welfare Officer * Be aware of the requirements set out in the current Swim England Wavepower document * Be aware of and comply with current Risk Assessments * Ensure all accidents & incidents are recorded in the Club Accident and Incident Book and forward a copy to the Welfare Officer * Attend meetings of the Welfare Panel when requested * Hold a current enhanced DBS check * Attend a Safeguarding & Protecting Children course every 3 years and forward copy certificate to the Welfare Officer. |

## The Welfare Panel:

* Will have a good knowledge of swimming and be aware of any particular hazards or dangers.
* Will be available to support athletes, taking time to listen to any concerns, issues or fears and will respond appropriately in according with the current Swim England Wavepower procedures.
* Will have good knowledge of club policies, risk assessments and club rules
* Have an understanding of the need for confidentiality
* Respond immediately to a reported incident
* Decide what level each case will be dealt with (minor poor practice through to suspected serious abuse)
* Decide the route the case will take (e.g., no further action, referral in writing to parent, Swim England referral, referral to external statutory agencies, etc.)
* Identify and act on any emerging themes such as bullying behaviour
* In cases where a fast response is necessary (e.g., during an away camp or overnight stay) the Welfare Panel will be available by mobile phone to make decisions
* Take concerns forward to either Swim England, Social Services, or the police following decision-making by the Welfare Panel
* The Welfare Officer will keep a written record of all meetings and archive appropriately

## A copy of the Welfare Plan should be shared with the following:

* Chair / Head coach
* Directors
* Paid and volunteer coaches
* Team Managers
* Club Secretary
* Club website

## DBS application procedure

* The Welfare Officer will ensure everyone with direct unsupervised access to children under 18 years receives an enhanced DBS check every 3 years.
* New applications can be requested by emailing the Welfare Officer with details of the applicant and their role within the club
* The Welfare Officer will instigate the application process via the online DBS clearance site.
* The applicant will receive an email invitation to complete an online application form
* Once the application form has been completed and submitted the applicant must show the Welfare Officer the relevant identity documents
* The Welfare Officer will then complete the verification process once happy with the identification provided.
* Swim England will carry out the DBS clearance process and where successful inform both the applicant and Welfare Officer of the DBS number and date. **If the DBS application is unsuccessful appropriate action must be taken immediately.**
* Swim England send reminder emails to both applicants and club Welfare Officers two months prior to expiry of DBS
* If applicant is still in post the application process is repeated to renew the DBS

## Safeguarding & Protecting Children and Time to Listen Courses

The club Welfare Officer will signpost to courses in the area. The club will pay for all appropriate staff to attend.

Swim England approved Safeguarding & Protecting Children courses to be attended every 3 years by all paid and volunteer coaches and teachers, team managers, chaperones, chairpersons and anyone else with direct access to children under 18 years old.

Renewal courses can be carried out online via the UK Coaching website.

Time to Listen courses will be attended once by all Welfare Officers

## What should be reported?

* Any concerns about a child’s welfare
* Any event or circumstance related to a child protection/welfare incident including bullying, poor practice and prejudicial behaviour
* Suspicions or allegations of:  
  - Misconduct/breach of Club Code of Conduct made against any member of staff  
  - Abuse made against any member of staff  
  - Misconduct/breach of Club Code of. Conduct made against a swimmer  
  - Abuse within a child’s family or community abuse made against a child.

*All incidents no matter how trivial they might appear, should be reported to the Welfare Officer. The following list highlights the type of incident that provide good indicators of safety concerns:*

* Any injury to any part of a person’s body
* Any case requiring medical or first aid treatment
* Any event or circumstance which is believed could have resulted in bodily injury, illness, shock or other condition requiring immediate treatment.
* Any event or circumstance which resulted in, or in which it is believed could have resulted in damage to the site, equipment, or personal property
* Incidents of continued poor or challenging behaviour which could affect the safety of others
* Observations of possible anorexia or other eating disorders
* Observations of self-harming (e.g., cutting, bit, scratch, burn marks, hair loss, etc.)
* Observations or rumours of misuse of social media
* Concerns over a swimmer’s mental wellbeing

## Reporting Procedure

Report any concerns to the Welfare Officer ([welfare1.bhsc@gmail.com](mailto:welfare1.bhsc@gmail.com)) who may request a written report. These reports may be shared with Swim England or relevant external agencies.

# 3. Child Protection Guidance

If any member of staff has concerns about an incident involving a child or young person that seems untoward or unusual, they must report their concerns as soon as possible to the Welfare Officer. Concerns should be recorded but this should not delay referral.

## THE 4 ‘R’s

**Recognise** – you have a concern, notice a problem or receive a direct disclosure

**Respond** – reassure the individual and tell them what you will need to do

**Refer** – make contact with the Club Welfare Officer

**Record** – who, what, where and when

**Remember – it is not your responsibility to decide**

**whether or not a child has been abused.**

**It is however, everyone’s responsibility to report any concerns however small. Don’t wait until you have the ‘whole picture’.**

**Responding to a disclosure:**

Information you receive about or from a child/young person may fall into one of the following categories:

* Concerns about abuse that has occurred outside the Club
* Suspicion or allegation of misconduct or abuse by a swimmer
* Suspicion or allegation of inappropriate behaviour or abuse by a member of staff, or another club member

**The different forms of abuse may include:**

* Emotional
* Neglect
* Physical
* Sexual
* Harassment or bullying

**Disclosures**

A child will disclose something to the person they feel most comfortable talking to. This may be you. Find a quiet and private place (but not alone behind closed doors). Always inform someone where you are going but ensure you are not out of sight from others for any period of time.

It is important to listen carefully to the information a child discloses. A child may tell you something because they feel they can trust you. When listening to a disclosure, the following good practice must be followed:

* React calmly
* Show you are listening with positive body language and eye contact
* Reassure the child and emphasise that they were right to tell
* Take what the child says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what a child in distress says
* Encourage a child to use their own words to describe their concerns
* If you need to clarify, keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said
* Only ask open questions
* Record what the child has said and what you have observed and report to the Welfare Officer.
* Be honest and say – **you will need to tell someone else if the abuse is to stop**

**Disclosure Don’ts**

* Panic
* Show shock, distaste or disbelief
* Ask closed questions
* Probe for more information than is offered
* Speculate or make assumptions
* Make comments about the person against whom the allegation has been made
* Introduce personal information from either your own experiences or those of other children
* Approach the individual against whom the allegation has been made
* Make promises or agree to keep secrets
* Give a guarantee of confidentiality

## **Responding to a suspicion or allegation of inappropriate behaviour or misconduct by a member of staff**

If you receive a disclosure that leads to a suspicion or allegation of inappropriate behaviour or misconduct by a staff member, the matter must be referred to the Welfare Officer immediately. The Welfare Officer will clarify the basic facts to establish whether there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that misconduct has occurred and refer to the Welfare Panel. Keep a written record.

**Responding to a suspicion or allegation of abuse against someone who is not present**

Gather the information in the same way and refer to the Welfare Officer. This information will be dealt with in the most appropriate manner.

All allegations of abuse must be taken seriously. If a child says or indicates that he/she is being abused or information is obtained which gives concern that a child is being abused, you must react as soon as possible and take forward the concern. Keep a written record.

**Managing allegations of historical abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event. Procedures are the same – record and refer.

**Disciplinary Procedure**

The Club Chairperson will have the authority to make the final decision in terms of suspending an individual from the Club or its activities in accordance with club policies. Swim England or the club will then carry out their own investigation. A coach in charge may immediately suspend an athlete from a training session or competition if the safety of the athlete or other swimmers is being compromised.

**Suspension**

Suspension is not a form of disciplinary action. A member of staff or any club member may be suspended whilst an investigation is carried out. The Club Chairperson will carry out this suspension.

**Sharing concerns with parents etc.**

* Where it is not abuse. Sometimes clarification from parents may be advisable where a child appears withdrawn or upset. They may be experiencing a family upset such as divorce, bereavement. Common sense is advised and advice sought from the Welfare Officer if there is any uncertainty about the appropriate course of action.
* Allegations of abuse – there are circumstances in which a child might be placed at even greater risk if concerns are shared e.g., where a club coach, parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse.
* Parents and carers of the child should be advised of the actions taken only if they are not implicated/involved in the concern. Please note that a parent cannot make the decision as to whether a safeguarding concern is disclosed to a statutory agency.

**If you believe it would be unsafe to allow a child to return home and the Welfare Officer is not available immediately the first response team or police emergency duty team should be contacted.**

**In an emergency when you believe a child has been harmed or may be at immediate risk of harm and you are unable to contact the Welfare Officer or Swim England Safeguarding Team then immediate contact should be made with Police, Children’s Services, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), NSPCC Child Protection Helpline or other agency as appropriate Take the name, contact details of the person you have spoken to and the incident / referral reference number (if applicable) so you have a record and report this to the Welfare Officer and Swim England Safeguarding Team as soon as possible e.g. next working day.**

# 4. Useful contacts

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| --- | --- |
| Welfare Officer | Liz Maddocks  07929 345999 welfare1.bhsc@gmail.com |
| Bristol City Council Children’s Services Safeguarding & Protecting Children | First Response 0119 9036444 |
| Avon & Somerset Police Safeguarding & Protecting Children Team | Emergency Duty Team 01454 615165 |
| County Welfare Officer | Rachel Roberts [rmbroberts1@gmail.com](mailto:rmbroberts1@gmail.com) |
| Regional Welfare Officer | Marion Britton [Marion\_britton@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Marion_britton@yahoo.co.uk) |

**SWIMLINE** (Child Protection helpline) - phone **0808 100 4001**

For parents, swimmers, teachers & coaches

**WAVEPOWER** Swim England’s Child Safeguarding Policy

Web site: [https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/wavepower-child-safeguarding-for-clubs/#](https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/wavepower-child-safeguarding-for-clubs/)

**NSPCC** (Child Protection in Sport Unit) 24 hour helpline **0808 800 5000**

**CHILDLINE** phone **0800 1111** (free 24 hour helpline for children and young people)

**SAMARITANS** phone **116 123** (24 hour helpline for adults)

**THE MIX** helpline **0808 808 4994** (13.00-23.00hrs daily)

Under 25s can talk to The Mix for free by phone, email or web chat. Also a phone counselling service.

**BEAT** helpline **0808 801 0677** Website: beateatingdisorders.org.uk – For help, advice and support in relation to eating disorders.

**SELF HARMING** For 24hr support in a crisis, Text **Shout to 85258** (or call 999

if life is in imminent danger)

**YOUNG MINDS** web site for parents and young people with advice about young people’s mental health and self-harm – youngminds.org.uk

**MIND** helpline **0300 123 3393** Website: mind.org. Mental health charity who provide a listening service and can also signpost to other services.

**CAMHS** NHS Mental health referral advice – see their web site for advice on accessing a referral. Usually via school or GP.