



## **Policies & Procedures**

The aim of this document is to outline to all staff and clients of Swordfish Swim School its policies and procedures and how we operate to ensure the safety and welfare of all users and those associated with Swordfish Swim School.

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## **Staffing**

Prior to a term starting all teachers will be given a brief as to any special requirements or arrangements made for a lesson. These can also be found in all teachers folders. Therefore they are able to discuss and contribute in a positive manner and are informed of any up-dates or information needed including specific information on children's medical conditions, special needs and behavioural issues.

Members of staff are expected to provide a friendly, welcoming, fun, caring and safe environment for the children to participate in.

All staff have received training and guidelines on supervising and running a swim session, therefore maintaining a safe, fun and secure environment for the children.

All staff are aware that all types of unfair discrimination, such as against age, colour, disability, gender, religion or sexual preference, are strongly opposed at Swordfish Swim School.

All staff will wear appropriate clothing including a Swordfish Swim School t-shirt, shorts or jogging bottoms and suitable footwear.

Any staff going into the water in swimming sessions will wear shorts and t-shirt.

All staff will have a written contractual agreement with Swordfish Swim School Qualifications, Experience and Safety checks.

All staff will have their backgrounds checked and cleared by an Enhanced DBS.

Swordfish Swim School do not employ staff that have been convicted of an offence or have been the subject of an order that disqualifies them from registration under regulations made under schedule 9A of the Children's Act 1989.

Teachers will be governing body qualified in the sport or activity they are teaching or have undergone sufficient intensive training and are deemed fit to teach swimming.

## **Staff Development and Training**

Prior to starting all staff will be issued with a job description and a copy of the policies and procedures.

All staff leading specialised activities will hold the relevant teaching qualification for the environment, group age, size and ability.

Records of the names and addresses of all staff members and a copy of all relevant qualifications / certificates are kept in the Swordfish Swim School Office.

### **Staff Ratios**

For Duckling stages there will be 1 teacher and at least 1 water helper, up to 6 children  
For stages 1 - 10 a water helper is discretionary up to 8 children per class.

### **Confidentiality**

Members of staff have a right to privacy, as do the children and their parents/carers.  
Personal details will not be discussed except in exceptional circumstances. Staff will not talk about individual incidents or the behaviour of children in front of parents / carers and other children.  
Staff will not provide information about children to any branch of the media without signed parental permission.

### **Standards of Behaviour**

Under no circumstances should any arguments or disagreements between members of staff occur in the presence of children or parents / carers.  
No smoking, alcohol or drug use is allowed on the premises of a Swordfish Swim School session.  
There is a no smoking in working hour's policy, on or off the premises.  
Swordfish Swim School does not permit bullying, we endeavour to promote a safe and caring environment for children.

### **Disciplinary Procedures for Staff**

Swordfish Swim School will provide a fair and consistent method of dealing with disciplinary incidents. Our aim is always to support and encourage staff, while promoting good employment relations.  
If a member of staff is subject to disciplinary action, fair and consistent procedures will be employed: The incident will be fully investigated and the facts established. Investigators will be non-discriminatory and apply equally to all staff irrespective of sex, marital status, sexual preference, race or disability. At every stage, the member of staff concerned will be advised of the nature of the complaint and given an explanation for any penalty imposed.  
Staff will be given the opportunity to state their case, and be accompanied by a friend or colleague of their choice, during any part of the disciplinary process.  
Staff will not be dismissed for a first breach of discipline except in the case of gross misconduct.  
Staff have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action taken against them.  
Investigations will be conducted by Swordfish Swim School.

The staff disciplinary procedure operates as follows:

- Informal discussion

Before taking any disciplinary action, the manager will make every effort to resolve the matter by informal discussions with parties concerned. Only where this fails to bring about satisfactory improvement or outcomes will disciplinary procedures be formally implemented.

- Formal verbal warning

Once a formal warning is given, the member of staff in question is notified of this. The staff member is given an explanation for the warning. They will be informed of their right to appeal. A brief note of the warning is kept in Swordfish Swim School's personnel records. This will be disregarded after six months, subject to satisfactory conduct and/or performance.

- Written warning

If, following a formal verbal warning, there is insufficient improvement in the standards, or if a further incident occurs, a written warning is issued. This states the reason for the warning and that, if there is no satisfactory resolution after a further month, a final written warning is given. A copy of this first written warning is kept in Swordfish Swim School's records, but will be disregarded after 12 months, subject to satisfactory conduct and/or performance.

- Final written warning

If the member of staff's conduct or performance remains consistently unsatisfactory, or if the misconduct is sufficiently serious, a final written warning is given making it clear that any further breach of the standards, or other serious misconduct, may result in the employee's dismissal. A copy of the warning will be kept in Swordfish Swim School's records, but will be disregarded after 24 months, subject to satisfactory conduct and/or performance. The warning will state clearly that dismissal will result from the failure to comply.

In certain exceptional circumstances, a member of staff may receive a Final Written Warning that will remain on Swordfish Swim School's records indefinitely. This course of action will follow when a member of staff has only avoided dismissal due to extenuating or mitigating circumstances.

### **Gross Misconduct**

If after investigation, it is deemed that a member of staff has committed an act of the following nature, dismissal will be the normal outcome:

- Child abuse
- Serious infringement of health and safety rules
- Assaulting another person
- Persistent bullying, sexual or racial harassment.
- Being unfit for work through alcohol or illegal drug use.
- Gross negligence that either causes or might cause injury, loss or damage to persons or property
- Theft, fraud or deliberate falsification of Swordfish School documents
- Deliberate damage to Swordfish Swim School's property
- Being an unfit person under the terms of the Care Standards Act 2000 or the Children's Act 1989.

While the alleged incident of gross misconduct is being investigated, the individual concerned is likely to be suspended, during which time normal pay levels will prevail. Such suspension is not to be regarded as a form of disciplinary action and will be for as short a period as possible. Any decision to dismiss will be taken only after a full

investigation.

If the staff member has been found to have committed an act of gross misconduct, they will be dismissed without notice.

### **Allegations against Staff**

All staff are advised to minimise time spent alone with children and be aware of the potential risks in doing so.

If an allegation of abuse has been made against a member of staff, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Michael Vinluan) will follow the procedures of the Safeguarding Policy.

### **Appeals**

Staff wishing to appeal against a disciplinary decision, must do so in writing and within 15 working days of the decision being communicated. Appeals will be dealt with as quickly as possible and within at least 15 days. If possible, a senior member of staff who was not involved in the original disciplinary action will hear the appeal and impartially adjudicate the case.

At all stages of the procedure, the right to appeal will be confirmed as part of the warning, suspension or dismissal letter

### **Disciplinary procedures for Children**

Persistent unacceptable behaviour from a child will result in them receiving a formal warning from staff about their actions. Staff will explain to the child why their behaviour is unacceptable and the consequences of any further such incidents.

Children will be encouraged to discuss their behaviour, to explain their actions, and helped to develop strategies to avoiding repeat incidents.

Details of all warnings, suspensions and exclusions will be recorded and kept on Swordfish Swim School's records on an incident form.

Every incident form will be discussed with the child parent/carer and teacher/head teacher. All staff will be made aware of any warnings given to a child. As a last resort, Swordfish Swim School reserve the right to temporarily suspend or permanently exclude a child in the event of persistent and irresolvable unacceptable behaviour. Only in the event of an extremely serious or dangerous incident will a child be suspended from Swordfish Swim School sessions with immediate effect. In such circumstances, the child's parent/carer will be contacted immediately and asked to collect their child, even if the child normally signs themselves out.

Children will not be allowed to leave the premises until a parent/carer arrives to collect them.

After an immediate suspension has taken place, Swordfish Swim School managers will arrange a meeting with the child concerned their parents/carers to discuss the incident and decide if it will be possible for them to continue.

Suspensions and exclusions should be seen consistent, fair and proportionate to the behaviour concerned. In setting such a sanction, consideration should be given to the child's age and maturity and any SEN requirements.

Any other relevant information about the child and their situation should also be considered.

Children will only be suspended or excluded as a last resort, when there is no alternative action that could be taken, or when it is felt that other children and/or staff are potentially at risk.

Staff should always keep parents/carers informed about behaviour management issues relating to their child and attempt to work with them to tackle the causes of disruptive or unacceptable behaviour.

No member of staff may impose a suspension from sessions without prior discussion with managers. Staff will consult managers as early as possible if they believe that a child's behaviour is in danger of warranting suspension or exclusion.

When a suspension is over and before a child is allowed to return to swimming sessions, there will be a discussion between staff, the child and their parent/carer, setting out the conditions of their return.

### **Arrivals**

Responsibility outside of the pool is the responsibility of the parent/carer. Once in the pool area, teachers are responsible for all children and must ensure their safety is key concern and the swimming pools NOP's apply.

If the parent / carer requires their child to be permitted to self-administer medicine during the day e.g. Use of an asthma inhaler, they must still complete and sign the Administering Medication Form. All parents/carers are asked to clearly label children's medication, check and indicate the medication's expiry date, batch number, dosage and ensure it is in its original packaging with the child's name on it.

All medications should be handed in to the registration desk at the start of each lesson except in cases where children must have them with them at all times e.g. Epi-pens, inhalers.

### **Care, learning and play**

Swordfish Swim School will provide a well-planned and organised environment that offers children rich and stimulating swimming/learning experiences.

At all times staff will recognise a child's individuality, effort and achievement.

Staff will display flexible styles of leadership and respond appropriately to children according to their age, understanding, and needs.

Staff will support, recognise, and promote achievements by all children.

### **Physical Environment**

Swordfish Swim School aims to protect the health, safety and welfare of the children attending our lessons.

The Staff induction process includes familiarisation on Health and Safety Policy and Procedures.

All staff are given a copy of the Staff Handbook with Risk Assessments outlining the operation of each activity.

Staff members undertake risk assessments of activity areas. There is an on-going programme of inspection and maintenance of equipment.

Risk assessments are in place for each activity and facility in use and these are reviewed as required.

The swimming pools Normal Operating Procedure (NOP) and Emergency Action Plan (EAP) will be adhered to by all staff.

### **Equipment**

All equipment is kept clean, well maintained. Equipment is properly maintained and inspected in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

The swimming pool complies with regulations regarding lifesaving equipment available on the poolside.

### **Health and Safety**

Swordfish Swim School aims to protect the health, safety and welfare of the children attending our sessions.

All accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences are recorded. If a child is involved their parents/carers are informed. This is done by either contacting the parent/carer immediately or at the end of the lesson when they pick up their child depending on the severity of the incident.

All staff are informed of what to do in the event of a fire at a particular pool and the procedures to contact the emergency services.

Each activity has a register taken at the beginning and at regular intervals.

### **Fire Safety Procedure**

On hearing the alarm children must stop what they are doing, line up by their swim teacher and wait to be taken to the nearest assembly point.

Once the children are assembled a register is taken.

At no time must any person re-enter the building until informed by a responsible person.

The member of staff discovering the fire is responsible for calling the emergency services.

They must also contact a senior member of staff or caretaker.

Fire procedures are displayed onsite.

### **Site Security**

All staff wear their Swordfish Swim School T-shirts so can be easily identified by others.

The Children Act 1989 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, place a number of legal responsibilities on Swordfish Swim School. Therefore, Swordfish Swim School have insurance cover appropriate to its duties under this legislation, including Employers' Liability insurance. Responsibility will, in most cases, rest with Swordfish Swim School but staff will take reasonable care, both for themselves and other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.

If Swordfish Swim School is held responsible for any incident that may occur, public liability insurance will cover compensation.

All activities will have a first aid kit and a qualified First Aider.

All swimming activities in the swimming pool are supervised by a qualified lifesaver.

## **Health**

All equipment and areas to be used are checked at the start for cleanliness and is signed by a member of the cleaning team.

Child not collected at the end of a lesson

In this event, the teacher will:

1. Contact the Swim School Manager to get the contact number for the parent/responsible adult and the emergency contact details if they are different.
2. The teacher will call the phone numbers provided to find out what the problem is and arrange an immediate pick up
3. If the parent cannot be contacted and the emergency number is also unsuccessful, the child should be asked if there is another family member who could be contacted.
4. If no-one can be contacted, the local Police should be contacted by the teacher to enquire about the best course of action.

## **Missing Persons**

The safety of a child outside of the water is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Parents are expected to remain off poolside during their child's lesson. Exceptional circumstances should be discussed with the Swim School Manager.

If a teacher realises that a child isn't in the class anymore and they are unsure of their whereabouts the first step is to ask the parent. If the child is believed to be missing the following emergency procedures must be followed by the teacher:

1. The pool would be cleared, and the water checked
2. The registers would be re-taken and the children supervised on poolside while the teacher checks the building
3. During any procedure it is the teacher who is responsible for the children in the water.
4. The changing rooms/toilets would be checked by the teacher in charge
5. The child's clothes would be checked by the parent and if still there, the child would be presumed to be still in the pool area. If gone, then the parent's car and surrounding area would be searched, and the hiring facility alerted by the teacher
6. The teachers should organise a search using responsible adults to cover all areas. All those searching should report back to the teacher in charge at a specific location and time
7. The Teacher must inform the Swim School Manager at the earliest opportunity
8. The teacher in charge should make a note of events, including a description of the missing child, what they were wearing and where they were last seen for the Police.
9. The Police must be called no later than 30 minutes after the young person's disappearance is noted, even if the search is not complete



10. If necessary, the teacher will follow emergency evacuation procedures and retake the register once outside of the building to ensure that all swimmers are accounted for

### **Sick Children Policy**

If a child arrives ill or becomes ill on a swim session, their parents / carers are contacted and requested to collect the child. If children display signs or symptoms of illness they are taken to the First Aid room where they are able to rest until they are collected. Parents/carers are advised to seek medical advice from their doctor and to keep the child away from a swim session for the recommended incubation period.

If an infection or communicable disease is discovered on Swordfish Swim School staff will notify the appropriate person at the school.

### **Medical / Consent Information**

Each pool will have a first aid kit provided to use by Swordfish Swim School. At the time of each booking of any medical information is disclosed by the parent/carer on the medical form.. All details are confidential and should not be left where people other than staff members can see them.

Parents/carers are requested to sign the medical form which includes a section allowing the staff to give permission for emergency medical treatment for their child in the event of a major accident, incident or illness occurring on a swim session.

### **Accident or incident procedure**

In the event of such an event, the following procedures will apply:

- The first aider will assess the situation and decide whether the child needs to go straight to hospital or whether they can safely wait for their parent/ carer to arrive.
- If the child needs to go straight to hospital, an ambulance is called. The parent/carer is also contacted.
- A member of staff will accompany the child to the hospital and will consent to medical treatment being given, so long as the Emergency Medical Treatment section of the medical form has been signed.
- If the child does not need to go straight to hospital but their condition means they should go home, the parent/carer is contacted and asked to collect their child. In the meantime, the child is made as comfortable as possible and kept under close supervision.
- If the child does not need hospital treatment and is judged to be able to safely remain at the school, the first aider will remove the child from the activity and, if appropriate, treat the injury/illness themselves.
- If the child is feeling sufficiently better, they will be resettled back into the activities, but will be kept under close supervision for the remainder of the session.
- Parents / carers are made fully aware of the details of any incident involving their child's health and safety, and any actions taken by staff.

- All incidents and accidents are recorded in detail and parents/carers should sign to acknowledge the incident and any action taken.

Swordfish Swim School and staff should consider whether the accident or incident highlighted any actual or potential weaknesses in its policies or procedures, and make suitable adjustments if necessary.

If a child is on a prescribed medication the parent/carer is asked to inform the swim school on the child medical form. Swordfish Swim School does not provide any medication apart from first aid.

### **Equal Opportunities**

To realise Swordfish Swim Schools objective of creating an environment free from discrimination and welcoming to all Swordfish Swim School will:

- Ensure that its services are open and available to all parents / carers and children in the local community.
- Ensure that issues of race, ethnicity, nationality, class, religion, culture, gender, language, sexual orientation and as far as possible disabilities do not inhibit a child from accessing Swordfish Swim School.
- Treat all children and their parents/carers with equal concern and value.
- Have regard for promoting understanding, respect and awareness of diversity and equal opportunities issues in planning and implementing Swordfish Swim School.
- Help all children to celebrate and express their cultural and religious identity by providing a wide range of appropriate resources and activities.
- Ensure that Swordfish Swim School recruitment policies and procedures are open, fair and non-discriminatory.
- Endeavour to recruit a staff team that reflects the make-up of Swordfish Swim School's local community.
- Ensure that all members of staff are aware of, and understand, the Equal Opportunities policy as it relates to all aspects of its work.
- Encourage and support staff to act as positive role models to children by displaying and promoting tolerant and respectful behaviour, language and attitudes and challenging any discriminatory incident.
- Treat seriously any member of staff found to be acting, or having acted, in a discriminatory way.
- Work to fulfil all the legal requirements of the Sex discrimination Act 1975, the Disability discrimination Act 2005, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.
- Swordfish Swim School is committed to the integration of all children in its care. It believes that children with special educational needs and /or physical disabilities have a right to play, learn and be able to develop to their full potential alongside other children. Whenever possible, children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities will have access to the same facilities, activities and play opportunities as their peers.

- Prior to a swim session, we will assess the medical make up of a group. If this group is found needing a Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator to manage provision for children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities. This person shall be allocated to that particular session. This individual will be fully trained and experienced in the care and assessment of such children.

### **Behaviour Management**

The aims of our Behaviour Management policy are to help children to:

- Develop a sense of caring and respect for one another.
- Build caring and co-operative relationships with other children and adults.
- Develop a range of social skills and help them learn what constitutes acceptable behaviour.
- Develop confidence, self-discipline and self esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

Swordfish Swim School and staff will work together to establish a clear set of 'ground rules' governing all behaviour in sessions.

The 'ground rules' will apply equally to all children and staff. Positive behaviour is reinforced with praise and encouragement.

Negative behaviour is challenged in a calm but assertive manner. In the first instance, staff will try to redirect children's energies by offering them alternatives and positive options. Staff will be open in stating and explaining non-negotiable issues.

Staff will make every effort to set a positive example to children by behaving in a friendly and tolerant manner themselves, promoting an atmosphere where children and adults respect and value one another.

If there is an issue with a child, staff will work as a team by discussing incidents and resolving to act collectively and consistently.

Staff will try to discuss concerns with parents/carers at the earliest possible opportunity in an attempt to help identify the causes of negative behaviour and share strategies for dealing with it.

### **The use of Physical intervention**

Staff will use physical interventions only as a last resort and only then if they have reasonable grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary to prevent a child from significantly injuring themselves or others or to prevent serious damage to property.

Before reaching this stage, staff will have used all possible non-physical actions, such as dialogue and diversion, to deal with the behaviour. The child or children concerned is/are warned verbally that physical intervention will be used if they do not stop.

A dialogue will be maintained with the child or children at all times, so that the member of staff can explain what they are doing and why they are doing it. Staff will make every effort to avoid the use of physical interventions if they are alone with the child or children.

Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied. For example, by diverting a child or children by leading them away by a hand or by an arm around their shoulders.

Staff will use physical intervention as an act of care and control and never punishment. Physical interventions will not be used purely to force a child to do what they have been told and when there is no immediate risk to people and property.

As soon as it is safe, the physical intervention should be gradually relaxed to allow the child or children to regain self-control.

The force of the physical intervention will always be appropriate to the age, size and strength of the child or children involved.

If staff are not confident about their ability to contain a particular situation or type of behaviour, consideration will be given to calling the child's/children's parents/carers, or, in extreme cases, the Police.

Where a member of staff has had to intervene physically to restrain a child, a senior member of staff will be notified and the incident recorded in the Incident Record Book. The incident will be discussed with the parent/carer at the earliest possible opportunity.

If a staff member commits any act of violence or abuse towards a child on a swim session, serious disciplinary action will be implemented, according to the provisions of the staff disciplinary procedures policy.

## **Bullying**

Everyone involved in Swordfish Swim School, staff children and parents/carers will be made aware of Swordfish Swim Schools' stance towards bullying. Such behaviour will not be tolerated or excused under any circumstances.

Swordfish Swim School defines bullying as the repeated harassment of others through emotional, physical, verbal or psychological abuse.

Examples of such behaviour are as follows:

- Emotional: Being deliberately unkind, shunning or excluding another person from a group or tormenting them.
- Physical: Pushing, scratching, spitting, kicking, hitting, biting, taking or damaging belongings, tripping up, punching or using any other sort of violence against another person.
- Verbal: Name calling, put-downs, ridiculing or using words to attack, threaten or insult. For example, spreading rumours or making fun of another person's appearance.
  
- Psychological: Behaviour likely to instill a sense of fear or anxiety in another person.

## **Preventing Bullying Behaviour**

All Swordfish Swim School staff will make every effort to create a tolerant and caring environment on each swim session, where bullying behaviour is not acceptable.

Staff will discuss issues surrounding bullying openly, including why bullying behaviour will not be tolerated and what the consequences of bullying behaviour will be.

### **Dealing with bullying behaviour**

Despite all efforts to prevent it, bullying behaviour is likely to occur on occasion and staff recognise this fact. In the event of such incidents, the following principles will govern Swordfish Swim School response:

All incidents of bullying will be addressed thoroughly and sensitively.

Children will be encouraged to immediately report any incident of bullying that they witness.

They will be reassured that what they say will be taken seriously and handled carefully.

Staff have a duty to inform a senior member of staff if they witness an incident of bullying involving children or adults on a swim session. If a child or member of staff tells someone that they are being bullied, they will be given the time to explain what has happened and reassured that they were right to tell.

The individual who has been the victim of bullying will be helped and supported by the staff team. They will be kept under close supervision and staff will check on their welfare regularly.

In most cases, bullying behaviour can be addressed according to the strategies set out in the Behaviour Management policy. The bully will be encouraged to discuss their behaviour and think through the consequences of their actions.

Where appropriate, they will be encouraged to talk through the incident with the other person concerned.

Where bullying behaviour persists, more serious actions may have been taken, as laid out in the Disciplinary Procedures for staff and children. A member of staff and a member of school staff will inform parents/carers of all the children involved in a bullying incident at the earliest possible opportunity. If appropriate, staff will facilitate a meeting between the relevant parents/carers. At all times, staff will handle such incidents with care and sensitivity.

All incidents of bullying will be reported to a senior member of staff and recorded. In the light of reported incidents, Swordfish Swim School and other relevant staff will review its procedures in respect of bullying.

### **Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers**

The staff team is committed to working in partnership with parent/carers to provide high quality, safe and stimulating care, and learning opportunities for children. We aim to achieve this by:

Ensuring that parent/carers are made to feel welcome and valued in all dealings with Swordfish Swim School.

Ensuring that parents'/carers' concerns are always listened to by Swordfish Swim School whenever they are raised. Swordfish Swim School will ensure that parents/carers receive a prompt response from themselves.

Making all information and records held by Swordfish Swim School on a child available to their parents/carers, unless it is subject to investigation by the Police and other statutory agencies.

Ensuring that Swordfish Swim School policies and procedures are made available to parents/carers on request.

Encouraging parents/carers to make suggestions/ comments about the swim sessions.

Ensuring parents/carers are able to arrange a time to discuss their child's progress and any problems they might be encountering.

Ensuring any complaints from parents/carers are dealt with swiftly and effectively in accordance with provisions of the Complaints Procedure policy.

Providing parents/carers with formal and, if necessary, confidential means to comment on the work of Swordfish Swim School. This will include an annual satisfaction survey. Keeping parents/carers up-to-date with any changes in the operation of Swordfish Swim School, such as alterations to the session times or fees.

### **Complaints Procedure**

This policy constitutes Swordfish Swim School's formal Complaints Procedure. It is displayed in each teacher's folder.

Under normal circumstances, the Managers will be responsible for managing complaints. If a complaint is made against the manager, the Swim Co-ordinator will be responsible for investigating. All complaints made to staff are recorded in detail on an incident form.

#### **Stage one**

If a parent/carer has a complaint about some aspect of Swordfish Swim School activity, or about the conduct of an individual member of staff, it will often be possible to resolve the problem by simply speaking to the individual concerned. In the first instance, parents/carers are encouraged to speak directly to the relevant member of staff, if deemed appropriate. If not, the manager should be approached and they will try to resolve the problem. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be found, then stage 2 of the procedure will formally come into operation.

#### **Stage two**

If informal discussions of a complaint or problem have not produced a satisfactory resolution to the situation, parents/carers should put their complaint in detail and in writing to the manager. Relevant names, dates, evidence and any other important information on the nature of the complaint should be included.

Swordfish Swim School will acknowledge receipt of the complaint as soon as possible – within three working days at least – and fully investigate the matter within 15 working days. If there is any delay, Swordfish Swim School will advise the parent/carer of this and offer an explanation. The manager will be responsible for sending them a full and formal response to the complaint.

If the person investigating has good reason to believe that the situation has safeguarding implications, they will inform the designated child protection officer and ensure that the local Safeguarding Team is contacted. If any party involved in the complaint has good reason to believe that a criminal offence has been committed, then they will contact Police.

The formal response to the complaint from Swordfish Swim School will be sent to the parent/carer concerned and copied to all relevant members of staff if appropriate.

The response will include recommendations for dealing with the complaint and for any amendments to Swordfish Swim School policies and procedures emerging from the investigation.

The manager will arrange a time to meet the parent/carer concerned and any other relevant individuals, such as members of staff, to discuss the complaint and Swordfish Swim School response to it. The person investigating will judge if it is best for all parties to meet together or if individual meetings are more appropriate.

If at the conclusion of this process parents/carers remain dissatisfied with the response they have received, the original complaint along with Swordfish Swim School's response will be passed to the ASA, who will adjudicate the case.

The ASA will communicate a detailed response, including any actions to be taken, to both the manager and the parents/carers concerned within 15 days.

### **Safeguarding Children**

Swordfish Swim School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead. This DSL will have suitable experience, training and expertise, and will be responsible for liaising with local services.

The policy and its procedures will be shared with parents/carers if they require.

### **Recognizing Child Abuse**

Child abuse manifests itself in a variety of different ways, some overtly and other much less so. All staff have child protection training and will be vigilant to signs and evidence of physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect.

Swordfish Swim School is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of child protection through the provision of support and training to staff. Therefore, Swordfish Swim School will ensure that:

All staff are carefully recruited, have verified references and have full and up to date DBS checks.

All staff are given a copy of the Child Protection policy during their initial training and have its implications explained to them.

All staff receive regular training and supervision in child protection issues and are provided with any relevant information and guidance.

All staff are provided with supervision and management support commensurate with their responsibilities in relation to child protection, and their requirement to maintain caring and safe relationships with children.

All staff are aware of the main indicators of child abuse.

All staff are aware of their statutory requirements in respect to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse and the procedures for doing so. All staff are instructed to report the disclosure or discovery of abuse to the DSL.

Swordfish Swim School will take appropriate action in relation to the findings of any investigation into allegations of abuse, consistent with its duties to protect the safety of children and uphold fair processes for staff and volunteers.

Any member of staff under investigation for the alleged abuse of a child will be subject to the provisions of the Staff Disciplinary Policy.

## **Safe Caring**

All staff understand Swordfish Swim School child protection procedures and have had appropriate training and guidance in the principles of safe caring. To this end:

Every effort will be made to avoid or minimize time when members of staff are left alone with a child. If staff are alone with a child, the door of the room should be kept open and another member of staff should be informed.

If a child makes inappropriate physical contact with a member of staff, this will be recorded fully on an incident form.

Staff will never carry out a personal task for children that they can do for themselves.

Where this is essential, staff will help a child whilst being accompanied by a colleague. Unless a child has a particular need, staff should not accompany children into the toilet/changing room. Staff are aware that this and other similar activities could be misconstrued. Staff will be mindful of how and where they touch children, given their age and emotional understanding. Unnecessary or potentially inappropriate physical contact will be avoided at all times.

All allegations made by a child against a member of staff will be fully recorded, including any actions taken, on an incident report form. In the event of their being a witness to an incident, they should sign the records to confirm this.

## **Dealing with allegations**

Swordfish Swim School is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of safeguarding by treating any allegations seriously and sensitively.

Swordfish Swim School will not carry out any investigation itself into a suspected child abuse incident. On discovering an allegation of abuse, the DSL will immediately refer the case to the local statutory child protection agencies.

Further to this, the following principles will govern any suspected or reported case of abuse:

Where actual or suspected abuse comes to the attention of staff, they will report this to the DSL at the earliest possible opportunity.

Staff are encouraged and supported to trust their professional judgment and if they suspect abuse has, or is taking place, to report this.

Full written records of all reported incidents will be produced and maintained.

Information recorded will include full details of the alleged incident; details of all the parties involved; any evidence or explanations offered by interested parties; relevant dates, times and locations and any supporting information or evidence from members of staff.

Swordfish Swim School will demonstrate great care in distinguishing between fact and opinion when recording suspected incidents of child abuse.

The DSL will be responsible for ensuring that written records are dated, signed and kept confidentially.

If an allegation of abuse is made against the a teacher, the DSL will be informed as soon as possible. They will then assume responsibility for the situation. Staff will ensure that any concerns and allegations are treated with sensitivity and confidentiality.



Any children involved in alleged incidents will be comforted and reassured. In circumstances where a child makes an allegation or a disclosure, the member of staff concerned will:

- Listen fully to all the child has to say • Make no observable judgment.
- Ask open questions that encourage the child to speak in their own words.
- Ensure the child is safe, comfortable and not left alone.
- Make no promises that cannot be kept: such as promising not to tell anybody what they are being told.

Staff will be made aware of the Department of Health's booklet 'what to do if You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused?' (2003), and its recent guidance on 'Protecting Children from Harm'.

### **Referring Allegations to Child Protection Agencies**

If the DSL has reasonable grounds for believing that a child has been – or is in grave danger of being – subject to abuse, the following procedure will be activated:

Contact will be made, at the earliest possible opportunity, with the local Social Services department within the specific area.

The DSL will communicate as much information about the allegation and related incidents as is consistent with advice given by Social Services and the Police.

At all times, the safety, protection and interests of children concerned will take precedence. The DSL and staff will work with and support parents / carers as far as they are legally able.

Swordfish Swim School will assist Local Safeguarding Services and the Police, as far as it is able, during any investigation of abuse or neglect. This will include disclosing written and verbal information and evidence.

### **Notification of changes**

Swordfish Swim School recognizes its responsibility in keeping children, parents/carers, staff informed of any changes to the running or management that will directly affect them.

Wherever possible, if changes are to be made affected parties will be given as much warning as possible. In the case of proposed changes that are of considerable scope or importance, we will facilitate consultation with the affected groups or individuals.

### **Confidentiality**

All staff or any other individual associated with the running or management of Swordfish Swim School will respect confidentiality by:

- Not discussing confidential matters about children with other parents/carers.
- Not discussing confidential matters about parents/carers with children or other parents/carers
- Not discussing confidential information about other staff members.
- Only passing sensitive information, in written or oral form, to relevant people.

In circumstances where staff have good reason to believe that a child is at risk, or is likely to be at risk, of child abuse or neglect, the Child Protection policy will override confidentiality or a 'need to know' basis.

Staff failing to show due regard for confidentiality will be liable to disciplinary action under the provision of the Staff Disciplinary Procedures policy.

### **Admissions Policy**

Swordfish Swim School aims to ensure the health, welfare and safety of your child/ren and therefore it is essential that children's details are obtained in advance of the day the child is attending e.g. medical conditions, special needs etc.

### **Final Payments**

When parents/carers sign up to lessons using the online booking system, they will be given the option to either pay via childcare vouchers or a monthly direct debit.

If you have any queries regarding your account, please contact Michael Vinluan on 07738675941 or [info@swordfishswim.com](mailto:info@swordfishswim.com)

### **Amendments / Additions to Bookings**

All bookings are non-refundable after a child has attended two or more sessions.