

The Role of the Independent Child Protection Officer for the ASA

The ASA has contracted support on a half time basis from an independent child protection officer (ICPO) to advise and deal with cases of a child protection nature.

All Welfare Officers can discuss issues of concern with the ICPO who will offer advice on how to deal with issues of child welfare. In certain situations the ICPO will become directly involved with the club and persons concerned.

The ICPO has a group of Swimline volunteers available to offer advice to all club members, officials and parents. All Swimline volunteers are experienced in dealing with issues of child welfare. When deemed appropriate by the ICPO and the Legal Affairs Department a Swimline volunteer can be used to act as a mediator in club disputes of a child protection nature, as outlined in the protocol. In such circumstances the Swimline volunteer will report to the ICPO or ASA Legal Affairs Department.

THE ROLE OF THE ASA WELFARE OFFICERS

The ASA has established a structure of welfare officers as follows. The role of each welfare officer is administrative to ensure proper procedures are followed in cases involving child welfare.

- 1 County welfare officer in each County
- 1 club welfare officer in each ASA club.

CLUB WELFARE OFFICER

- To have an understanding of child protection, and how best practice and the use of the criminal bureau checks and recruitment and selection procedures can help prevent child abuse. To assist the Amateur Swimming Association to safeguard children and young people in swimming and to implement the ASA child protection plan at club level.
- To do this by working to the ASA policy document and by consultation

with the legal affairs department and the Independent child protection officer of the ASA.

- To ensure all persons who have significant contact with children in the club complete a CRB check when they join the club or when requested to if they are existing club personnel.
- To have details of the following contact numbers:
 - Swimline
 - The ASA Legal Affairs Department
 - The Local Social Services Department
 - The Local Police Child Protection Team
 - N.B. Child Protection Police and SSD have an out of hour's service
 - To have an understanding of the role of the police and social services in child protection and how to make referrals as necessary through the ASA Legal Affairs Department or directly in an emergency
- To ensure all club swimmers, parents, officials, teachers and coaches are aware of the child protection policy and procedure of the Club and the ASA and make available copies of relevant club and ASA documents.
- To be available to advise any person in the club who has a concern of a child protection or poor practice nature of the appropriate procedure to follow to refer the concern appropriately. To maintain appropriate records of all concerns raised.
- To promote best practice within the club at all times and question issues arising from poor practice and ensure the club committee deals with them appropriately. If necessary refer concerns of poor practice to the ASA legal affairs department
- To promote and raise awareness of child protection training available and to ensure all persons undertake appropriate Child Protection training according to their role.
- To sit on the club management committee and ensure the issue of child welfare in the club is raised, monitored and reviewed

appropriately. To advise the committee on actions required when child welfare issues are referred.

- To ensure confidentiality is maintained at all times by all members of the club committee over issues of a child protection nature.
- To promote anti-discriminatory practice within the swimming club.
- To have an awareness of equity issues and the ASA equity policy.
- To ensure Swimline notices are displayed at club training venues.
- To refer all concerns of a child protection nature to the ASA Legal Affairs Department for action/information.
- To ensure club policies and practices are reviewed every 3 years and revised appropriately.

COUNTY WELFARE OFFICER

- To have an understanding of child protection, and how best practice and the use of the criminal record bureau checks can help prevent child abuse. To have a working knowledge of the child protection policy and procedures of the Amateur Swimming Association and how to refer concerns appropriately as outlined in the procedure document.
- To have an understanding of the role of the police and social services in child protection and how to make referrals as required through the legal affairs department or directly in an emergency
- To have an awareness of equity issues and the ASA Equity policy.

- To promote anti-discriminatory practice within swimming clubs in the County and the County ASA.
- To support and advise the club welfare officer to refer a child protection concern appropriately.
- To become directly involved, or nominate another suitable member of the County in advising or supporting a club in matters of a child protection nature upon the express request of the Legal Affairs Department.
- To arrange annual meetings with club welfare officers for the purposes of sharing information and training, with the support of Swimline volunteers
- To disseminate information on child protection from the ASA to all club Welfare Officers.
- To refer all concerns of a child protection nature to the ASA.
- To assist clubs in their review of policies and practices as requested or nominate a person able to do so.
- To assist the ICPO by helping to inform on local resources.

EQUITY

The ASA takes its responsibility to protect all children irrespective of their race, creed or specific needs. To ensure this it is essential that club policy reflects the ASA Equity policy outlined below,

All ASA clubs are required to take measures to ensure all the needs of children and young people to be protected from abuse are addressed by the club as follows:

- The club policy makes it clear all children have equal rights to protection.
- The club gives guidance on child protection through policy, procedure and where applicable training, to promote awareness and identification of potential abuse and recognition of the needs of all groups in society.
- The club has a code of conduct that expects all members and adults concerned with the club to treat children with dignity, fairness, sensitivity and respect.

- The club has a code of conduct that makes it clear that discrimination, offensive or violent behaviour is not acceptable and that complaints will be acted upon.
- The club complaints procedure is open in nature, available in writing to all who request it and observe the following key principles:
 - All parties are fairly treated
 - The complainant has the opportunity to present their case
 - The accused has the opportunity to respond or call witness(es) in support of their case.

