



# WEST WIGHT SWIMMING CLUB

## CHILD WELFARE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### The Club Policy

The ASA and West Wight Swimming Club are committed to promoting the welfare of all involved in swimming and we seek to establish a process that makes it straightforward for people to raise any concerns they have. This procedure will be adopted when a complaint is received from any ASA member or ASA member of staff, involving a child (at all times a person under the age of 18 years) and which is deemed to be a child welfare issue by a Club Welfare Officer, County Welfare Officer, Regional Welfare Officer or the ASA Safeguarding Team and the ASA Independent Child Protection Officer (ICPO).

### The Procedure

#### Step One – Informal Resolution Locally

**Timescale: Immediate**

Most concerns can be resolved informally and it is the responsibility of the member or volunteer to bring forward issues at the time they arise and to try and resolve them through informal means. Ideally, if at all possible, you should consult your club Welfare Officer before embarking on any course of action. However, if it is minor in its nature, you may be able to speak with the coach or club secretary who will be able to resolve your issue prior to involving the Welfare Officer. Confidentiality will be maintained on a “need to know basis” i.e. only the coach, the Welfare Officer and child’s parents may need to know of a concern and no one else. Sometimes the individuals involved may need to be extended to the Team Manager (for example a child causing distress to another during club sessions) or to the Chairman.

#### Step Two – Resolution through Club Welfare Officer

**Timescale: Intervention 7 Days**

The primary role of the club Welfare Officer will be to resolve to the satisfaction of the child, parent, guardian, carer or anyone else the welfare issues complained of, if at all possible. A club Welfare Officer may have matters referred to them for example through Step One or may have matters brought directly to their attention. The club Welfare Officer will consider the nature of the complaint and if they are able to address the concern. It is anticipated that club Welfare Officers will be able to address issues such as minor club rule infringements, poor practice and issues of bullying. Concerns to be dealt with by a club Welfare Officer should be child welfare concerns only. Matters of child protection will be referred, where appropriate, immediately to the appropriate statutory authority.

#### Step Three – National Level – The ASA Independent Child Protection Officer

**Timescale: Intervention 3 Days**

The ASA ICPO will have a right to be involved in any child welfare matter, which the ASA ICPO in consultation with the Director of Regulatory and Legal Affairs reviews and decides needs ASA intervention. For example:

1. Where one party remains unhappy that the problem has not been resolved at Step One or Step Two.
2. Where a matter is brought to the ASA ICPO’s attention by an ASA Welfare Officer at Steps One or Two.
3. At any stage, by direct referral to the ASA ICPO by an ASA member (child or adult), parent, guardian or carer of an ASA member.

Within three days of a child welfare complaint being brought to the attention of the ASA ICPO consideration will be given to section 2 (i) of the Protocols For Child Safeguarding Investigations found in the ASA Handbook. The ASA ICPO will liaise with the club Welfare Officer to ensure that the club is handling the child welfare issue correctly. The club Welfare Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the club follows the ASA ICPO’s guidance. It is entirely a matter for the ASA ICPO as to the level of involvement and the guidance given. At any point throughout the ASA ICPO’s involvement, the issues will be kept under constant review and a decision may be taken to:

1. Implement a referral to a statutory agency under section 2 (ii) of the Protocols For Child Safeguarding Investigations.
2. Appoint an independent investigator to complete a fact-finding investigation under section 2 (iii) of the Protocols For Child Safeguarding Investigations.
3. Make a formal complaint under the ASA Judicial Regulations under section 2 (iv) of the Protocols For Child Safeguarding Investigations.
4. Take such action as recommended by the ASA ICPO (e.g. a direction that an individual be required to submit to a risk assessment or that the ASA file a complaint against a club or an individual).

The above timescale provides an indication that within three days of being notified of a child welfare issue, the ASA ICPO will decide the level of his/her involvement and will inform all parties accordingly. The ASA ICPO will have the child’s welfare as the main concern and will try to resolve the issues with that main concern in mind. The ASA ICPO will try to achieve a successful resolution or to decide other appropriate action or to have concluded and closed the file within three months of the original referral. Where a three month conclusion is not possible, e.g. because of the involvement of a statutory agency, the ASA ICPO will seek to keep the child (through their parent, guardian or carer) informed of progress being made.

