



# THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE: FOR A WELFARE OFFICER



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## Welcome!

You have either been appointed as, or are considering a role as a club volunteer. We wish you a fulfilling and enjoyable experience in your role, and appreciate your commitment and time you are giving in developing the sport.

## How this resource will help you?

This resource is intended to assist you in your role by providing:

- A guide to the roles and responsibilities of this position
- Templates/resources to assist you and save you time
- Top tips and good practice from experienced volunteers
- Further information and learning/training opportunities

This resource complements other national volunteer publications, which are listed at the back of this resource. The ASA Good Club Guides EXTRA will be particularly helpful, providing practical tips, questions and answers that will equip you with further knowledge and information as a Welfare Officer.

## Links to Swim21



swim21 is the ASA's club development programme. The Good Club Guide is intended to complement swim21, by providing tools, templates and resources that will assist the running of a club, and ultimately assist in achieving or maintaining swim21 accreditation.





## Role of the Welfare Officer

The main purpose of the role is to assist with the safeguarding and protecting of children and young people in aquatics, and to implement the ASA Wave power policy and procedures. In doing so, the person undertaking the role of a Welfare Officer should have an understanding of child protection, and how best practice and the use of the criminal record bureau (CRB) checks can help prevent child abuse.

## Example role description for a Club Welfare Officer

### Duties of a Welfare Officer

- Assist the club to put in place the ASA Wave power policy and procedures
  - Assist the club to put in place implementation plans for child protection
  - Be the first point of contact for club staff and volunteers, young people and parents for any issue concerning child welfare, poor practice or potential/alleged abuse
  - Ensure that all incidents are correctly reported and referred out in accordance with the Wave power guidance guidelines
- Ensure that all relevant club members, volunteers and staff have a CRB check and the opportunity to access appropriate child protection training
  - Ensure that ASA Wave power procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed
  - Ensure all appropriate staff or volunteers have up to date criminal records disclosures/self disclosures
  - Be aware of and have a note of contact details of the local Social Services, the Police and NGB ICPO
  - Ensure that codes of conduct are in place for club staff, volunteers, coaches, competitors and parents
  - Sit on the Club Management Committee to advise on child protection issues or be in attendance as necessary
  - Ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a "need to know" basis

### Commitment/time for the role

Will vary from club to club, but will include attendance at club meetings, and dedicated time should any child protection concerns be raised.

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## Skills and Qualities Required

- To have an understanding of child protection
- To have an understanding of how best practice and the use of criminal records checks can help prevent child abuse
- To be a good communicator, and is approachable, clear and concise
- To be a good listener with an empathy for young people
- To respect confidentiality, and be tactful and discreet

## Training required

- Child Protection in Sport “Time to Listen” training for designated persons for child protection/welfare in sport
- Safeguarding Children in Sport workshop. (Contact your ASA Regional office for details)

## Tools for the role

The following are deemed to be essential items for a Welfare Officer to have in order to do their role:

- Use of a computer and email address to produce letters, emails, reports, and to store and record information
- Filing system to record all correspondence
- Notebooks to record information
- Annual diary
- Club headed stationery
- CRB forms for completion by club staff and volunteers
- Telephone with access to an answer phone facility
- The following resources relating to child protection:
  - ASA Wave power: Child welfare in Swimming: procedures and guidelines
  - ASA: Frequently asked questions on child protection
  - ASA: Code of conduct for “away” trips
  - ASA: Regulations for the ASA Child Protection list
  - DCMS: Helping keep your child safe in sport
  - ASA/NSPCC: Safe Sport Away



## Getting Started

The following sections will guide a Club Welfare Officer through the key areas of the role description above. This resource should be read in conjunction with the other ASA child protection documents listed at the back of this resource, and the other ASA good club guides, available via [www.britishswimming.org](http://www.britishswimming.org)

## Purpose of a child protection policy for the club

The purpose of a child protection policy is to promote and ensure the well being of children and young people taking part in the club's activities. The policy should also ensure that all those responsible for the welfare of children and young people:

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

The ASA policy document (listed at the back of this resource) provides guidance on the development of a club policy for child protection.

## Top Tips for a Club Welfare Officer

**1. Set up a system to ensure all persons who have significant contact with children within the club complete a CRB check.**

This can be done with new volunteers when they join the club or through you requesting all appropriate club personnel to complete a CRB check. Forms are available via the ASA. Keep your own register of people that have completed a CRB check.

**2. Promote key contacts and organisations that provide advice and guidance on child protection.**

Some clubs have done this via club handbooks, notice boards and event programmes. Ask your club captains and/or members for their advice on how this information could be promoted too. The organisations recommended by the ASA to promote are:

- o Swimline
- o The ASA Legal Affairs Department
- o The Local Social Services Department
- o The Local Child Protection Police Department

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**3. Be knowledgeable and clear about how to make a referral.** A referral would be to the ASA Legal Affairs department or directly to the Police or Social Services in an emergency. You can do this by accessing appropriate training for your role, or following the ASA guidance information (listed at the back of this resource). All referrals to Police or Social Services must be copied to the ASA.

The ASA Independent Child Protection Officer can be contacted through the ASA Legal Affairs department for advice and guidance on Child Protection matters.

**4. Promote the club child protection policy at the club.** Some clubs have included this policy information within club handbooks, on the website or distributed copies to all new members joining the club.

**5. Be approachable.** Make yourself known to members of the club and ensure all members are aware that you are available to advise any person in the club who has a concern of a child protection nature.. Clubs have done this through providing photos and contact details of a Club Welfare Officer on websites and notice boards, so members know who to approach. Similarly, having a presence at training sessions and competitions/events on a regular basis helps too.

**6. Promote best practice.** Club Welfare Officers have done this through:

- a. Providing information sheets or briefing sessions to teaching/coaching staff and volunteers
- b. Contributing to codes of conduct for athletes, volunteers, parents to share and promote best practice
- c. Arranging training courses for volunteers (see further information)
- d. Raising awareness at committee meetings
- e. Ensuring any questions or issues arising from poor practice are referred to the club committee for action, or to the ASA Legal Affairs Department as appropriate

**7. Raise awareness of child protection at the highest levels within the club.** Ideally, Club Welfare Officers should sit on the club management committee, and ensure child protection matters are raised, monitored and reviewed. You are also then in a great position to advise the club committee on actions and issues relating to child protection in general committee discussions, and ensure confidentiality is maintained at all times by all members of the committee over issues of a child protection nature.

**8. Review your club child protection policy.** This should be every three years, and should ideally fall in line with timescales of reviewing the clubs development plan and other policies.



## Education & training on child protection

There are various training opportunities available for all those who have direct contact with children in the club and any others who wish to do it. The main providers are listed as follows:

- The ASA runs a series of swimming specific child protection workshops which are based on the Safeguarding & Protecting Children course run by Sportscoach UK. Further information, and any local course information is available through ASA Regional Offices
- Sportscoach UK (scUK) Safeguarding & Protecting Children course. The course aims are to:
  - o Protect yourself, the young people you are coaching and your employer by understanding and following good coaching practice
  - o Learn about child abuse and how to handle situations if you have concerns
  - o Identify good coaching practice to promote a positive relationship with children
  - o Identify sport situations and coaching practice that might constitute either poor practice or possible abuse
- o Identify ways of dealing with your own feelings about child abuse and state what constitutes neglect, physical, sexual and emotional abuse
- o Recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and appreciate why reporting it is often so difficult
- o Identify appropriate action if a child discloses he/she has been abused
- o Identify appropriate action if abuse is suspected and explain the role and responsibilities of other experts (e.g. police, social services)
- o Describe appropriate practice that reduces the likelihood of abuse occurring.
- runningsports has developed a workshop called "Club for all". This is mainly targeted at ensuring equity, but may be appropriate depending upon training needs

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These workshops are all highly recommended in ensuring best practice and guidance around child protection. A great way to find out about courses in your area is to contact your ASA Regional Office, and/or your County Sports Partnership (CSP). Many CSPs offer discounts on training courses for volunteers, and generally programme courses throughout the year. Attendance at these courses is also a requirement for swim21 and clubmark, so they are important.

**Top tip:** Work in partnership with your Workforce Co-ordinator to arrange training for volunteers. This should save you time, and ensure all volunteer training is also recorded at the club too.

## Moving on from your role.....

Have you thought about how you will ensure all your knowledge and experience is passed on to a person taking over from you, when you decide its time to move on?

Here are some suggestions to ensure a smooth transition, and to ensure the person taking over from you has the information and resources they need:

- Try to give as much notice to the club that you are moving on, in order to allow the club to recruit / elect another volunteer
- Assist in developing an up to date role description and advert for the post based on your experience in the role, and think of any people that may be interested
- Think about the type of information you would like to receive if you were to volunteer for this position, and the format you would like to receive it in eg. one big file, a face to face hand over meeting, hand over in a 2 week period to not overload with information
- Prepare an information pack for the new volunteer to assist them in their role
- Prepare a list of any outstanding work/ issues
- Prepare a top tips or similar list to help a new volunteer
- Provide a list of key contacts or people who can assist a new volunteer
- Hand over hard copies of any files or important correspondence. Put electronic information onto a USB stick or disk
- Offer to mentor the new volunteer in this role for an agreed period of time



## Summary

We hope you have found this guide informative in supporting you in your role, and providing you with information and helpful tips. We wish you a great experience in your role and thank you once again for all your time and commitment you are giving to the sport.

## Further Information

The ASA accepts no liability for any errors or omissions in this resource. Further, whilst it is hoped that volunteers will find this resource useful, no liability arising out of its use can be accepted by the ASA or the club.

This resource is not a contract of employment and the role you undertake as a volunteer will not create an employment relationship between you and the club or the ASA.

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The ASA has a number of valuable resources to support the role of the Club Welfare Officer. These are all available on the website at [www.britishswimming.org](http://www.britishswimming.org)

- ASA: Child welfare in Swimming: procedures and guidelines
- ASA: Frequently asked questions on child protection
- ASA: Code of conduct for “away” trips
- ASA: Regulations for the ASA Child Protection list
- DCMS: Helping keep your child safe in sport
- ASA/NSPCC: Safe Sport Away

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## Further Information cont...

### **Amateur Swimming Association**

Harold Fern House  
Derby Square  
Loughborough  
Leics LE11 5AL  
Tel: 01509 618700  
Email: [info@swimming.org](mailto:info@swimming.org)  
Web: [www.britishswimming.org](http://www.britishswimming.org)

### **runningsports**

3rd Floor, Victoria House  
Bloomsbury Square,  
London WC1B 4SE  
Tel: 0800 363373  
Email: [info@runningsports.org](mailto:info@runningsports.org)  
Web: [www.runningsports.org](http://www.runningsports.org)

### **Sport England**

3rd Floor, Victoria House  
Bloomsbury Square,  
London WC1B 4SE  
Tel: 0845 850 8508  
Email: [info@sportengland.org](mailto:info@sportengland.org)  
Web: [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)

### **CCPR - One voice for sport and recreation**

Fourth Floor  
Burwood House  
14-16 Caxton Street  
London SW1H 0QT  
Tel: 020 7976 3900  
Email: [info@ccpr.org.uk](mailto:info@ccpr.org.uk)  
Web: [www.ccpr.org.uk](http://www.ccpr.org.uk)

### **Child Protection in Sport Unit**

NSPCC National Training Centre  
3 Gilmour Close  
Beaumont Leys  
Leicester LE4 1EZ  
Tel: 0116 234 7278  
Email: [cpsu@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:cpsu@nspcc.org.uk)  
Web: [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk)

### **SkillsActive**

Castlewood House  
77-91 New Oxford Street  
London WC1A 1PX  
Tel: 0207 632 2000  
Email: [skills@skillsactive.com](mailto:skills@skillsactive.com)  
Web: [www.skillsactive.com](http://www.skillsactive.com)

### **National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service (NACVS)**

177 Arundel St  
Sheffield S1 2NU  
Tel: 0114 278 6636  
Email: [nacvs@nacvs.org.uk](mailto:nacvs@nacvs.org.uk)  
Web: [www.nacvs.org.uk](http://www.nacvs.org.uk)

### **Sportscoach UK**

114 Cardigan Road  
Headingley  
Leeds LS6 3BJ  
Tel: 0113 274 4802  
Email: [coaching@sportscoach.org](mailto:coaching@sportscoach.org)  
Web: [www.sportscoachuk.org](http://www.sportscoachuk.org)



# aquaFORCE

volunteers

## Volunteering England

Regents Wharf  
8 All Saints st  
London N1 9RL  
Tel: 0845 305 6979  
Email: [information@volunteeringengland.org](mailto:information@volunteeringengland.org)  
Web: [www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)

## Youth Sport Trust

Sir John Beckwith Centre for sport  
Loughborough University  
Loughborough  
Leics LE11 3TU  
Tel: 01509 226600  
Email: [info@youthsporttrust.org](mailto:info@youthsporttrust.org)  
Web: [www.youthsporttrust.org](http://www.youthsporttrust.org)

## County sports Partnerships

(located all across England.  
Contact details available via  
ASA Regional Offices.

dedicated section for volunteers? To find this section, go to [www.britishswimming.org](http://www.britishswimming.org), and click on the “club” tab at the top of the home page. When you are through to the “club” page, click on the “volunteers” link on the left hand side of the page.

Your **ASA County Workforce Co-ordinator** may be able to provide guidance and assistance to you in your role. Further details are available on the British Swimming website.

Your **County Sports Partnership** will have information about local child protection workshops for volunteers and coaches. Their contact details will be available via ASA Regional offices. They may also offer discounts on the cost of training courses too.

## Acknowledgements

The ASA are grateful for the contributions and input from the ASA Volunteer Working Group in ensuring these resources are written and reviewed by volunteers, for volunteers. These resources also draw upon the work developed by the ASA independent child protection officer, swim21 clubs, runningsports and Volunteering England. The ASA would like to acknowledge and thank these organisations for their support and permission in using the work they have completed.

## In addition

runningsports has a series of top tips that can be downloaded for free. These include tips on health and safety of volunteers, recruiting young volunteers and older volunteers. Available at [www.runningsports.org](http://www.runningsports.org)

## ASA website pages dedicated to volunteers.....

Did you know the ASA website has a



**Amateur Swimming Association**  
Harold Fern House Derby Square  
Loughborough LE11 5AL  
Tel: 01509 618700 Fax: 01509 618701  
Email: [volunteering@swimming.org](mailto:volunteering@swimming.org)  
[www.britishswimming.org](http://www.britishswimming.org)