

Safeguarding Policy

Version 2.0 | Last updated: 1 September 2026

If someone is in immediate danger

Call 999. Do not wait for a reply to an email or website message. For a non-emergency concern about a SwimWise activity, email hello@swimwise.scot and mark the message "Safeguarding concern".

1. Our commitment

SwimWise Scotland CIC is committed to creating swimming, coaching and community activities where children and adults are treated with dignity, listened to and protected from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We will take concerns seriously, respond promptly and work with the appropriate agencies where necessary.

This is our public-facing safeguarding policy. It explains the standards people can expect from us and how to raise a concern. It sits alongside our internal child protection, adult protection, safer recruitment, PVG, code of conduct and incident-recording procedures.

2. Who and what this policy covers

This policy applies to all SwimWise Scotland CIC directors, employees, volunteers, contractors and sessional workers, and to all activities delivered by or on behalf of SwimWise. This includes pool lessons, coaching, open-water sessions, community programmes, outreach, events and online communication connected with our work.

It covers children and young people under 18, and adults who may be at risk of harm. Under the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, an adult at risk is a person aged 16 or over who meets the relevant legal criteria; an adult is not treated as being at risk simply because they have a disability, illness or support need.

3. Our safeguarding responsibilities

The SwimWise Operations Director is the Safeguarding Lead and Lead Signatory. They are responsible for safeguarding leadership, responding to concerns, maintaining records, overseeing relevant PVG arrangements and liaising with Police Scotland, social work and other agencies when required.

The Administration Director is the countersignatory and supports safeguarding administration, secure handling of disclosure information, documentation and training and vetting records. SwimWise directors hold overall responsibility for ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place.

Everyone working for or on behalf of SwimWise must follow this policy and our code of conduct, maintain professional boundaries, complete appropriate training, and report any concern without delay.

4. What safeguarding concerns can look like

Safeguarding concerns may involve abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying, harmful behaviour between children, online harm, coercion, discrimination, financial abuse, unsafe practice or a breach of professional boundaries. A concern may arise from something a person says, something seen or heard, a pattern of behaviour, an injury, a change in presentation or an immediate safety risk.

Nobody needs to be certain that harm has happened before sharing a concern. If something does not feel right, it should be reported.

5. How to raise a concern

If there is immediate danger

Call 999. If you believe a crime has been committed but there is no immediate danger, contact Police Scotland on 101. If a child or adult needs urgent medical help, call 999.

For a concern connected with SwimWise

Tell the Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible and on the same day. You can email hello@swimwise.scot, clearly marking the message "Safeguarding concern". Do not use the normal website contact form for an urgent concern.

If the concern is about the Safeguarding Lead, or you do not believe it is appropriate to report it to them, contact Police Scotland, the relevant local authority social work or adult protection service, or another SwimWise director. You can also seek advice from the local authority child protection or adult support and protection service.

If someone tells you about harm

Stay calm, listen and take them seriously. Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling someone. Do not promise to keep the information secret, do not ask leading questions and do not investigate or confront anyone involved. Record what was said or observed as accurately as possible, using the person's own words where you can, and report it immediately.

6. How SwimWise responds

The Safeguarding Lead will consider the immediate safety of the person and any other people who may be affected. They will record the concern factually, seek advice where appropriate and make a referral to Police Scotland, children's social work or adult support and protection services when this is required. Statutory agencies are responsible for deciding whether to investigate.

Where a concern relates to a member of staff, volunteer or contractor, SwimWise will take appropriate interim steps to manage risk while advice is sought. This may include changing duties or stopping a person from working with children or adults at risk. We will meet our legal and regulatory duties, including making a referral to Disclosure Scotland where required.

7. Information sharing and confidentiality

We will respect privacy and share safeguarding information only with people who need it to protect someone, manage a risk or meet a legal duty. We may share information without consent where this is necessary and lawful to protect a child or adult at risk, prevent or detect a crime, or protect other people. Information will be relevant, proportionate, accurate and kept secure.

Adults should be involved in decisions about support and information sharing wherever it is safe and appropriate. We will respect an adult's rights, wishes and ability to make decisions, while acting where there is a serious risk of harm or a legal duty to do so.

8. Safer people and safer practice

We use safer recruitment and selection practices for relevant roles. This includes identity checks, references, role-appropriate PVG scheme membership and recruitment declarations, alongside induction, supervision and safeguarding training. All staff and volunteers are expected to follow professional-boundary, safer-working and digital-communication expectations.

We do not permit adults working with SwimWise to use personal devices or private social-media accounts to communicate directly with children. Physical contact must be appropriate, necessary and explained, with the person's comfort, safety and dignity considered at all times.

9. Training, records and review

Staff and volunteers receive safeguarding induction and role-appropriate child or adult protection learning. Training, supervision and safeguarding arrangements are reviewed as our work develops.

Safeguarding concerns and actions are recorded factually and stored securely. This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and sooner after a safeguarding incident, a significant change in our work or relevant legal, guidance or regulatory changes.

10. Contact

SwimWise Scotland CIC
Gynack Villa, 1 High Street, Kingussie, Scotland, PH21 1HS
hello@swimwise.scot
www.swimwise.scot

11. Legal and guidance framework

This policy is informed by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007; the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007; the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014; the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 (updated 2023); the Adult Support and Protection Code of Practice (2022); the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Data Protection Act 2018; UK GDPR; and relevant Disclosure Scotland guidance.