

Equality, Inclusion & Additional Support Policy

Version 1.0 | Last updated: 1 September 2026

Our commitment

We want everyone to have the opportunity to learn, progress and feel safer in water. We will work to remove barriers to participation and make reasonable adjustments where we can.

1. Our approach

SwimWise Scotland CIC is committed to creating swimming, coaching and water-safety opportunities that are welcoming, respectful and inclusive. We will listen carefully to the people and families who know what support may help, and we will work to remove barriers to meaningful participation.

Inclusion does not mean treating everyone identically. It means recognising that people may need different approaches, communication, environments or levels of support to take part safely and successfully.

2. Who this policy applies to

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, school swimming, community programmes, events, outreach and online communication connected with our work.

It applies to children, young people, adults, parents, carers, schools, community partners and anyone enquiring about or taking part in SwimWise activity.

3. Equality and dignity

We will not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying. We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic circumstances, caring responsibilities or any other aspect of a person's identity or background.

We will treat people with dignity and respect, and expect the same from everyone involved in SwimWise. Concerns involving discriminatory language, behaviour, bullying, harassment or harmful behaviour will be taken seriously and managed in line with our safeguarding and complaints procedures.

4. Additional support

People may need additional support for many reasons. This may relate to disability, neurodiversity, sensory or communication differences, physical or mental health, learning needs, confidence, previous experiences, language, temporary injury, pregnancy or maternity, faith or cultural considerations, or changes in personal circumstances.

A formal diagnosis is not required for someone to ask for support. We encourage parents, carers and adult swimmers to tell us about anything that may help a person take part, learn or feel comfortable in the water. We will listen to the swimmer wherever possible, as well as to their parent, carer or relevant professional.

Information about health, disability or support needs will be handled sensitively and in line with our Privacy Notice.

5. Reasonable adjustments

As a service provider, SwimWise will make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would otherwise be placed at a substantial disadvantage. Adjustments will depend on the individual, the activity, the venue and the safety requirements involved.

Adjustments may include:

- adapting communication, instructions, demonstrations or lesson resources;
- allowing extra time to understand, respond or settle into a session;
- using visual prompts, routines or step-by-step teaching;
- considering the timing, environment, noise, group size or entry route for a session;
- adapting activities, equipment or learning goals;
- discussing whether a support person can assist;
- considering alternative class options, progression routes or a more suitable level of support; and
- providing information in a more accessible format where practical.

We also aim to consider accessibility when planning sessions, rather than waiting until someone asks for an adjustment.

6. Safe participation and class placement

We will not exclude someone simply because they have a disability, diagnosis, additional support need or different way of learning. However, swimming and water-based activity involve real safety considerations. Decisions about class placement, staffing, ratios, activity design and support arrangements must be based on the individual's needs, the skills and experience of the staff available, the venue, and the safety of everyone taking part.

We will discuss these decisions openly and respectfully. If we cannot safely meet someone's needs within a particular group or session, we will explain why, consider what adjustments or alternatives may be possible, and avoid making assumptions about what a person can or cannot do.

A request for a particular arrangement does not guarantee that it can be provided. We will always seek the most inclusive practical option that is safe, reasonable and within our control.

7. Communication, privacy and belonging

We aim to communicate clearly and respectfully with all swimmers and families. We will use people's chosen names and pronouns where possible, and will handle personal information with care. We will work with participants and families to consider privacy, dignity, changing arrangements, communication preferences and any cultural or faith-related requirements.

Where venue facilities or third-party arrangements create limitations, we will be honest about these and discuss practical options.

8. Working with schools and partners

The Additional Support for Learning framework is designed principally for education authorities and schools. SwimWise is not an education authority and does not take on a school's statutory duties. However, when we work with schools, ASN provision, community organisations or other partners, we will use the same practical principles.

- identify barriers early;
- listen to the child or young person and those who know them well;
- plan support around individual strengths and needs;
- communicate clearly about roles, arrangements and risks;
- review what is working; and
- work collaboratively to support meaningful participation and progress.

Where appropriate and with the relevant permissions, we will work with schools, parents, carers and support staff to agree safe, proportionate arrangements for swimming participation.

9. Staff knowledge and practice

SwimWise staff and volunteers will receive appropriate induction, guidance and support for their role. We will continue to develop our knowledge of inclusive swimming, equality, safeguarding, communication and water safety, using relevant learning and guidance from the aquatics sector.

We recognise that no single qualification or policy makes someone an expert in every support need. We will seek advice, training or specialist input where this is needed.

10. Raising a concern or asking for support

If you would like to discuss support before booking or attending a session, email hello@swimwise.scot.

If you believe that you or someone else has been treated unfairly, excluded or discriminated against in connection with SwimWise, please tell us as soon as possible. We will listen, consider the concern fairly and explain what action we can take.

Safeguarding concerns should be raised in line with our Safeguarding Policy. If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and sooner if there is a significant change in law, guidance, our activities or learning from feedback, complaints or incidents.

12. Legal and guidance framework

This policy is informed by the Equality Act 2010; the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, as amended; the associated Supporting Children's Learning Code of Practice; the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014; the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Data Protection Act 2018; UK GDPR; and relevant equality, diversity and inclusion guidance from Scottish Swimming, Swim England and the Swimming Teachers' Association.

13. Contact

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