

Health & Safety Statement

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Our commitment

Safety in and around water is at the heart of SwimWise. We plan carefully, use appropriately trained people, assess risk and act if conditions change.

1. Our approach

SwimWise Scotland CIC is committed to providing swimming, coaching, water-safety and community activity in a safe, welcoming and well-managed way. We take reasonable steps to protect the health, safety and welfare of swimmers, parents and carers, staff, volunteers, contractors and others affected by our work.

Safety is a shared responsibility. We want people to enjoy water with confidence, while recognising that safe activity depends on good planning, appropriate supervision, clear communication and sensible decisions when circumstances change.

2. What sits behind this statement

This is a public statement of our approach. Detailed internal arrangements, including risk assessments, venue and activity plans, emergency procedures, first-aid arrangements and staff briefings, sit behind it and are reviewed separately.

Our arrangements are proportionate to the activity, the people taking part and the setting. We do not rely on generic paperwork alone: controls are considered for the specific session, venue or location.

3. How we manage safety

We manage health and safety by identifying hazards, assessing the risks, putting sensible controls in place, recording significant findings and reviewing arrangements when something changes.

This includes, where relevant:

- using appropriately qualified, experienced and briefed people for the activity being delivered;
- planning activities around participants' ages, experience, confidence, support needs and the environment;
- following venue rules, local operating procedures and agreed emergency arrangements;
- providing or confirming suitable supervision, equipment, communication and first-aid arrangements;
- maintaining clear records of incidents, accidents, near misses and safety concerns; and
- reviewing learning from incidents, feedback, changes to a venue, activity or guidance.

4. Pool-based activity

For pool sessions, SwimWise works within the rules and safety arrangements of the venue. We are responsible for the safe delivery of our own sessions, including session planning, teaching and supervision arrangements. The venue is responsible for its own building, plant and facility systems. We communicate and cooperate with venue operators so that responsibilities and emergency arrangements are clear.

Supervision and staffing are considered through risk assessment rather than a one-size-fits-all rule. This takes account of the pool, activity, age and ability of swimmers, session size, equipment and any relevant support needs.

5. Open-water activity

Open-water activity is planned separately for each location and activity. Before and during a session, we consider factors such as weather, water and shore conditions, temperature, visibility, access and exit points, participant ability, communication, supervision, first aid and emergency response.

If conditions or information change, we may adapt, postpone or cancel an activity. This is a safety decision, not a failure of the session: no activity is more important than making the safer choice.

6. Inclusion and safe participation

We want people to have fair access to swimming and water-based activity. We will consider reasonable adjustments and practical support where we can, while making sure that safety decisions are based on the individual activity and relevant information, not assumptions about a person or a diagnosis.

For more information about this approach, please see our Equality, Inclusion & Additional Support Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

7. What we ask of participants and families

To help us run sessions safely, participants and parents or carers should:

- follow reasonable instructions from SwimWise staff and venue staff;
- tell us about relevant health, support or access information that may affect safe participation, and update us if this changes;
- make sure that the information provided when booking is accurate;
- tell a member of staff promptly about a hazard, incident or safety concern; and
- follow any venue-specific rules and session information provided before taking part.

We handle personal information in line with our Privacy Notice.

8. Incidents, emergencies and concerns

We record and review relevant accidents, incidents, near misses and safety concerns so that we can improve our practice. Where an incident requires it, we will follow venue procedures and make any report required by law.

If someone is in immediate danger or needs emergency assistance, call 999. Safeguarding concerns should be raised promptly using the contact route in our Safeguarding Policy and must not wait for a routine health-and-safety response.

9. Review

This statement will be reviewed at least annually, and sooner if there is a significant change in our services, venues, relevant law or guidance, or learning from an incident.

10. Legal and guidance framework

Our health-and-safety arrangements are informed by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and relevant Health and Safety Executive guidance, including Health and safety in swimming pools (HSG179), alongside venue-specific procedures and appropriate sector guidance.

11. Contact

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