

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY FOR  
ALL STAFF AT CORAL REEF SWIM SCHOOL**

THIS DOCUMENTATION HAS BEEN WRITTEN FOLLOWING THE ‘SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS’ POLICY AS GUIDANCE ESTABLISHED BY THE SWIMMING TEACHING ASSOCIATION (STA). THE DEFINITIONS USED TO DESCRIBE THE KEY TERMS HAVE BEEN WRITTEN IN-LINE WITH THE DEFINITIONS CREATED BY GOV.UK. THE INFORMATION ON THE TYPES OF ABUSE HAVE BEEN WRITTEN FOLLOWING INFORMATION FROM THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN (NSPCC).

**INTRODUCTION:**

- Abuse in all its forms can affect a child, young person, or vulnerable adult at any age.
- It is the responsibility of every adult to safeguard the wellbeing of children, young people, and vulnerable adults, and to promote good practice; regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- Research suggests that children and young people with disabilities are at an increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation, and a powerlessness to protect themselves, or to adequately communicate that abuse has occurred.
- Research also suggests that children and young people from ethnic minorities, who may also be experiencing racial discrimination, may be doubly powerless.
- In having regular contact with children, young people, and (vulnerable) adults at Coral Reef Swim School, it is essential that all staff are aware and are able to identify cases where an individual may be at risk or in need.
- At Coral Reef Swim School, all staff have a responsibility to take all reasonable, practical steps to protect all children, young people, and (vulnerable) adults from harm, discrimination, or degrading treatment.
- It is paramount that whilst working at Coral Reef Swim School, all suspicions and allegations of abuse are taken seriously; and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- It is important to work together with parents/guardians/carers and other organisations for the protection of children, young people, and vulnerable adults, and to ensure that the needs and the welfare of all remain paramount.
- It is essential that all staff respect the rights, wishes, and feelings of all children, young people, and (vulnerable) adults at Coral Reef Swim School.

This policy explains what abuse is and sets out guidelines informing you of your moral and legal duty to ensure you provide the highest possible standard of care. It can offer safeguards to the individual with whom we work, and to all members of staff. It also helps to maintain the professionalism and the standards of practice that is associated with the Swimming Teaching Association (STA).

There are four main sections to this policy:

1. What Is Abuse (pg 3 – pg 14).
2. Processes and Procedures (pg 15 – pg 21).
3. Contact Information (pg 22 – pg 23).
4. Signature of Understanding (pg 24).

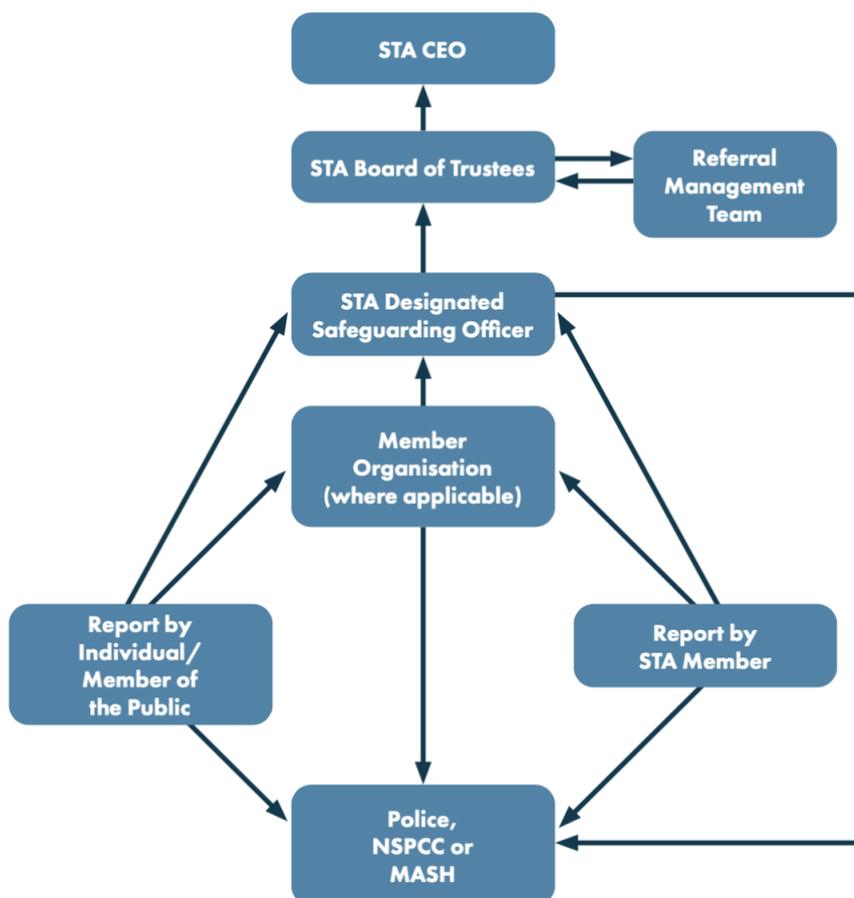
**KEY TERMS:**

- Definition of a Child & Young Person: ‘anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection’ (Working Together to Safeguard Children,2018 – GOV.UK – [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/942454/Working\\_together\\_to\\_safeguard\\_children\\_inter\\_agency\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf)).
- Definition of Vulnerable Adult: ‘any adult (person over the age of 18) unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from exploitation’ (Vulnerabilities: applying All Our Health,2021 – GOV.UK – <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vulnerabilities-applying-all-our-health/vulnerabilities-applying-all-our-health>).

## **1. WHAT IS ABUSE**

### **RECOGNITION OF ABUSE:**

- It is important to understand that abuse and/or poor practice can occur within many situations including: the home; school; and sporting environments.
- Whilst recognising signs of abuse is not always explicit, it is absolutely essential that all staff at Coral Reef Swim School report *any* concerns they may have about the welfare of a child.
- All concerns should be reported to Coral Reef Swim School’s Safeguarding Officer; Ellie Depledge-Barr.



- Once reported to the Safeguarding Officer at Coral Reef Swim School, it is their responsibility to ensure that the appropriate advice is obtained from the Swimming Teaching Association’s (STA) Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH).
- Should the Safeguarding Officer at Coral Reef Swim School be unavailable, or the concern is about the Safeguarding Officer, the member of staff in receipt of the information must contact either the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) or Social Services directly. In emergency, contact Police.
- The Social Services department works together with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) and have a statutory responsibility to ensure the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

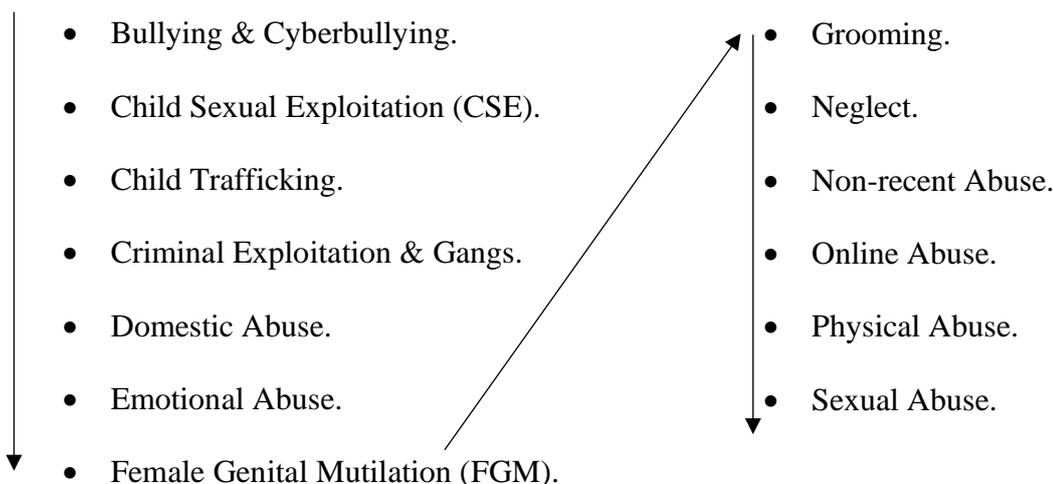
**INDICATIONS OF ABUSE:**

It is important to note that the list below stating a number of indications of abuse is not exhaustive. Examples include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- The child/young person/vulnerable adult themselves describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her, *or* someone else (another child/young person/adult), expresses concern about the welfare of a child/young person/vulnerable adult.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour i.e., becoming very quiet or displaying sudden outbursts.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness and/or engages in sexually explicit behaviour in activities/games.
- Is distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship will normally be expected.
- Has difficulty in making friends.
- Is prevented from socialising with other children.
- Displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Loses weight for no apparent reason.
- Becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.

The presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place and it is not the responsibility of the staff at Coral Reef Swim School to decide whether child abuse is occurring, *however* it is the staff's responsibility to act immediately upon any concerns using all reasonable, practical steps.

**FORMS OF ABUSE:**



The definition and signs of abuse stated below have been written in-line with the descriptions told by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC). *Please see <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/> for more information.*

**WHAT IS BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING:**

- Bullying: When an individual is presenting behaviours such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening, or undermining another individual to hurt them.
- Cyberbullying: Bullying that takes place online via applications i.e., social networking sites/gaming.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING:**

Examples include:

- Asking for, or stealing money (to give to the bully).
- Physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises.
- Being afraid of going to a certain place i.e., school.
- Being nervous, distressed, withdrawn, and losing confidence.
- Problems with eating/sleeping.
- Belongings getting lost/damaged.
- Bullying others.

**WHAT IS CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE):**

- It is a type of sexual abuse in which a child or young person is given things such as gifts, drugs, money, status, and/or affection in exchange for performing sexual activities.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE):**

Examples include:

- Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- Being frightened of some people, places, or situations.
- Having money or belongings they can't or won't explain.
- Sharp changes in mood or character.
- Physical signs of abuse such as bruises or bleeding (in their genital or anal area).
- Being secretive.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Sexually transmitted infections.
- Pregnancy.

Other indicators which may be less visible or known to us include:

- Having an older boyfriend/girlfriend.
- Stopping going to school or college.
- Hanging out with older people, other vulnerable people or in antisocial groups.
- Involved in criminal activities i.e., drugs/shoplifting.
- Having a new group of friends.
- Staying out late/overnight.
- Missing from home/care.
- Involved in a gang.

**WHAT IS CHILD TRAFFICKING:**

- This is where children and young people are tricked, forced, or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work, or sold to another individual. This can be for; sexual exploitation, benefit fraud, forced marriage, domestic slavery, forced labour, or committing crimes.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF CHILD TRAFFICKING:**

Examples include:

- Spending a lot of time doing household chores.
- Rarely leaving the house or having no time for playing.
- Being orphaned or living apart from their family.
- Living in low-standard accommodation.
- Being unsure which country, city, or town they're in.
- They can't, or are reluctant, to share personal information or where they live.
- Are not registered with a school or a GP practice.
- Have no access to their parents/guardians/carers.
- Are to be seen in appropriate place such as factories.
- Have money or belongings you wouldn't expect them to have.
- They have injuries from workplace accidents.
- Give prepared stories (which are often similar to those given by other children and young people).

**WHAT IS CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION & GANGS:**

Criminal Exploitation: This is where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes.

Gangs: Gangs are not illegal, however membership in a gang can often be linked to illegal activity including trafficking, drug dealing, and violent crime. There are 3 different types meaning different things depending on the context, including; Peer Group Gangs – this is normally a relatively small and transient social grouping which may or may not describe themselves as a gang depending on the context.

Street Gangs – this is normally a group of children or young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as an apparent group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity.

Organised Gangs – this is normally a group of individuals for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise), and is perceived as their 'occupation'.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION & GANGS:**

Examples include:

- Frequently absent from, and/or doing badly in school.
- Going missing from home, staying out late, and/or travelling for unexplained reasons.
- In a relationship or hanging out with an individual much older than them.
- Being angry/aggressive/violent or being isolated/withdrawn.
- Having unexplained money and buying new things.
- Wearing clothes/accessories in gang colours, getting tattoos, or using new slang words.
- Spending more time on social media and being secretive about time online.
- Making more calls or sending more texts, possibly on a new phone or phones.
- Self-harming and feeling emotionally unwell.
- Taking drugs and abusing alcohol.
- Committing petty crimes such as shop lifting or vandalism.
- Unexplained injuries and refusing to seek medical help.
- Carrying weapons or having a dangerous breed of dog.

**WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE:**

- This includes any type of controlling, bullying, threatening, or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can occur inside or outside the home and/or over the phone, internet, or social networking sites. Both men and women can be abused or abusers, and it can happen in any relationship, even after the relationship has ended. It can seriously harm children and young people, and experiencing this is a type of child abuse.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE:**

Examples include:

- Aggression or bullying.
- Anti-social behaviour, such as vandalism.
- Anxiety, depression, or suicidal thoughts.
- Attention seeking.
- Bed-wetting, nightmares, or insomnia.
- Constant or regular sickness such as colds, headaches, and mouth ulcers.
- Drug or alcohol use.
- Eating disorders.
- Tantrums.
- Issues in school/having trouble with learning.
- Withdrawal.

**WHAT IS EMOTIONAL ABUSE:**

- Also known as psychological abuse, it is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child/young person/vulnerable adult which involves deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate, or ignore the child/young person/vulnerable adult.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE:**

For signs of emotional abuse, it is not likely that there will be any obvious physical signs. A child/young person/vulnerable adult might not tell anyone what's happening until they reach a 'crisis point' and that is why it is essential to look out for signs in how a child/young person/vulnerable adult is acting. For example:

- They seem unconfident or lack self-assurance.
- They struggle to control their emotions.
- They have difficulty making or maintaining relationships.
- They act in a way that is inappropriate for their age.

Additionally, signs of emotional abuse can also be different for children and young people at different ages. The more specific signs of emotional abuse for babies and toddlers, and for older children are stated below.

**SIGNS IN BABIES AND TODDLERS:**

Examples include:

- Being overly-affectionate to strangers or people they don't know well.
- Seem unconfident, wary, or anxious.
- Do not have a close relationship or bond with their parent/guardian/carer.
- Are aggressive or cruel towards other children or animals.

**SIGNS IN OLDER CHILDREN:**

Examples include:

- Act in a way/know things you wouldn't expect them to for their age.
- Use language you wouldn't expect them to know for their age.
- Struggle to control their emotions i.e., have extreme outbursts.
- Lack social skills.
- Seem isolated from their parents/carers.
- Have few/no friends.

**WHAT IS FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM):**

- This is when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. The young girls are rarely given anaesthetic or antiseptic treatment and are often forcibly restrained.

- It is also known as ‘female circumcision’, ‘cutting’, ‘sunna’, ‘gudniin’, ‘halalays’, ‘tahur’, ‘megrez’, and ‘khitan’.
- It is used to control female sexuality and/or prevent unwanted male attention, and can cause long-lasting damages to physical and mental health.
- It can happen at different times in a girl or woman’s life including; when a baby is new-born, during childhood or as a teenager, just before marriage, or during pregnancy.
- There are some FGM terms that are important to be aware of;
  1. ‘Cutter’ – this is somebody who carries out FGM. They might use things like knives, scalpels, scissors, glass, or razor blades to carry out the procedure.
  2. ‘Cutting Season’ – this refers to the summer months (July – September) in which FGM is often carried out. This is when many girls are on a break from school and may be flown abroad during this time to have the procedure carried out, so it’s important to be aware of this.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM) MIGHT HAPPEN:**

Examples include:

- A relative or someone known as a ‘cutter’ is visiting from abroad.
- A special occasion or ceremony is being planned to take place, where a girl ‘becomes a woman’ or is being ‘prepared for marriage’.
- A female relative, like a Mother, Sister, or Aunt has undergone FGM.
- A family arranges a long holiday overseas or visits other family abroad during the summer holidays.
- Unexpected or long absences from school or other activities such as swimming lessons.
- Struggles to keep up in academic school work or in activities such as swimming lessons.
- A girl runs away, or plans to run away from home.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM) MIGHT HAVE TAKEN**

**PLACE:**

Examples include:

- Having difficulty walking, standing, or sitting.
- Spending longer in the bathroom or toilet.
- Appearing quiet, anxious, or depressed.
- Acting differently after an absence.
- Reluctance to go to the doctors or emergency services.
- Asking for help – though they might not be explicit about the problem because they are scared or embarrassed.

**WHAT IS GROOMING:**

- This is when someone builds a relationship, trust, and emotional connection with a child/young person/vulnerable adult so that they can manipulate, exploit, and abuse them.
- Groomers may also build a relationship with the child/young person/vulnerable adult's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.
- It is important to note that anybody can be a groomer, regardless of age, gender, race, or sexuality.
- It can happen in person or online.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF GROOMING:**

Examples include:

- Being very secretive about how they're spending their time, including when online.
- Having an older boyfriend/girlfriend.
- Having money or new belongings they can't or won't explain.
- Underage drinking or drug taking.
- Spending more or less time online or on their devices.
- Being upset, withdrawn, or distressed.
- Presenting sexualised behaviour, language, or having an understanding of sex that is not appropriate for their age.
- Spending more time away from home or going missing for periods of time.

**WHAT IS NEGLECT:**

- This is the ongoing failure to meet the basic needs of the child/young person/vulnerable adult i.e., they might be left hungry, dirty, without proper clothing, shelter, supervision, or health care. This can put a child/young person/vulnerable adult in danger.
- This is the most common form of child abuse.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF NEGLECT:**

Having one sign does not necessarily mean a child/young person/vulnerable adult is being neglected, but if there are multiple signs that last for a period of time, it might highlight a serious problem. Children/young people/vulnerable adults who are neglected might have: poor appearance and hygiene, health and development problems, house and family issues, and changes in behaviour.

**SIGNS OF POOR APPEARANCE AND HYGIENE:**

Examples include:

- Being hungry or not given money for food.
- Having unwashed clothes.

- In infants, having a frequent and untreated nappy rash.
- Being smelly or dirty.
- Having the wrong clothing, such as no warm clothes during the winter period.

**SIGNS OF HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS:**

Examples include:

- Body issues, such as poor muscle tone or prominent joints.
- Skin issues such as sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies, or ringworm.
- Not given the correct medicines.
- Missed medical appointments.
- Poor language or social skills.
- Regular illnesses/infections.
- Repeated accidental injuries, often caused by a lack of supervision.
- Medical/dental issues.
- Anaemia.
- Thin/swollen tummy.
- Weight/growth issues.
- Tiredness.
- Untreated injuries.

**SIGNS OF HOUSING AND FAMILY ISSUES:**

Examples include:

- Living in an unsuitable home environment, such as having no heating.
- Being left alone for a long period of time.
- Taking on the role of carer for other family members.

**SIGNS OF CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR:**

Examples include:

- Being withdrawn, depressed, or anxious.
- Displaying obsessive behaviour.
- Showing signs of self-harm.
- Finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities.
- Missing school or other activities such as swimming lessons.
- Becoming clingy.
- Becoming aggressive.
- Changes in eating habits.
- Using drugs or alcohol.

**WHAT IS NON-RECENT ABUSE:**

- Also known as historical abuse, this is when an adult was abused as a child or young person under the age of 18. Some individuals might have known for a long time that they were abused, however some might have only recently learnt or understood what happened to them.

- It is important to be aware that sometimes adults who were abused during their childhood, blame themselves or are made to feel it's their fault – *this is not the case; there is no excuse for abuse.*

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF THE EFFECTS OF NON-RECENT ABUSE:**

Abuse can have a significant and serious effect on children and the consequences of this can be extremely detrimental; on their health, their relationships, and education. Unfortunately, the impact can last a lifetime; abuse from childhood can be transferred into adulthood for example, the individual may:

- Become reliant on alcohol and/or drugs.
- Develop mental health problems such as depression, eating disorders, self-harm, or suicidal thoughts.
- Have disturbing thoughts, emotions, and memories.
- Have emotional difficulties such as anger, anxiety, sadness, or low self-esteem.
- Struggle to cope with life stressors.
- Struggle to get a job.
- Have poor physical health.
- Struggle maintaining relationships.
- Struggle with being able to be the type of parent they want to be.

If someone has been abused as a child, it is more likely that they'll suffer abuse again – this is known as revictimisation.

**WHAT IS ONLINE ABUSE:**

- This is any type of abuse that occurs on the internet, across any device that is connected to the web including computers, tablets, and mobile phones.
- It can happen anywhere online including; emails, live-streaming sites, online chats, online gaming, social media, and text messages/messaging apps.
- Children/young people/vulnerable adults can be at risk of online abuse from people they know or from strangers.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF ONLINE ABUSE:**

Examples include:

- Spending a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming and/or using social media.
- Being distance, upset, or angry after using the internet or texting.
- Being secretive about who they are talking to and what they are doing online or on their mobile phone.
- Having lots of new phone numbers, texts, or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop, or tablet.

**WHAT IS PHYSICAL ABUSE:**

- This is when someone intentionally hurts or harms a child/young person/vulnerable adult, including: hitting with hands or objects; slapping and punching; kicking; shaking; throwing; poisoning; burning and scalding; biting and scratching; breaking bones; and drowning.
- It also includes making up the symptoms of an illness or causing a child/young person/vulnerable adult to become unwell.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE:**

It is essential to note that bumps and bruises do not always mean a child/young person/vulnerable adult is being physically abused. In particular, all children and young people have accidents, trips, and falls. However, if a child or young person regularly has injuries, there seems to be a pattern to the injuries, the child or young person is hesitant to explain, or the explanation doesn't match the injuries, then this should be reported immediately. Examples include:

- Breathing problems (from drowning, suffocation, or poisoning).
- Broken or fractured bones.
- Burns or scalds.
- The effects of poisoning such as vomiting, drowsiness, or seizures.
- Bruises.
- Bite marks.
- Scarring.

Head injuries in babies and toddlers can be signs of abuse. Examples include:

- Being extremely sleepy or unconscious.
- Breathing problems.
- Bruising.
- Unusual behaviour i.e., irritable, or not feeding properly.
- Fractures.
- Seizures.
- Swelling.
- Vomiting.

**WHAT IS SEXUAL ABUSE:**

- This is when a child/young person/vulnerable adult is forced or tricked into sexual activities. It can happen in person or online, and by someone they know or a stranger. There is both contact and non-contact sexual abuse. Contact abuse is where an abuser makes physical contact with a child whilst non-contact sexual abuse is where a child is abused without being touched by the abuser.
- A child/young person might not understand that what's happening to them is abuse or that it is wrong.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE:**

Examples include Emotional and Behavioural Signs, and Physical Signs.

**EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL SIGNS:**

Examples include:

- Avoiding being along with, or frightened of people or a person they know.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Being secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone.
- Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem.
- Changes in their mood, feeling irritable and angry, or anything out of the ordinary.
- Have lots of new phone number, texts, or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop, or tablet.
- Having nightmares or bed-wetting.
- Language or sexual behaviour you wouldn't expect them to know at their age.
- Seem distant, upset, or angry after using the internet or texting.
- Self-harm.
- Spending a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming, or using social media.

**PHYSICAL SIGNS:**

Examples include:

- Bleeding, discharge, pains, or soreness in the genital or anal area.
- Sexually transmitted infections.
- Bruises.
- Pregnancy.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

Whilst some indicators stated will not be visible or known to staff at Coral Reef Swim School, it is essential we understand the indicators so that if a parent/guardian/carer or friend of the child discloses one or more of these signs, then the staff member in receipt of the information can take the appropriate action to raise the concern. Additionally, it is important for staff at Coral Reef Swim School to make conversations with swimmers, especially in regard to their life outside of swimming lessons I.E., 'what did you do this week/weekend?', 'what did you have for breakfast', 'who do you live with at home?' and/or 'oh dear, where did you get that bruise/mark from?'. It may be that in having these conversations, the swimmer presents a verbal indicator of one or more signs that abuse may be occurring. Furthermore, having a positive, developed rapport with swimmers may give an individual the confidence to confide in a member of staff at Coral Reef Swim School to speak about some problem/issues they may be having.

## **2. PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES**

### **WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD, YOUNG PERSON, OR VULNERABLE ADULT REVEALS ABUSE:**

A child, young person, or vulnerable adult who is being abused might not realise what's happening is wrong. They may even blame themselves. Therefore, it is important to;

- React calmly and listen carefully to what they're saying – you do not want to frighten them.
- Let them know they've done the right thing by telling you.
- Tell them they are not to blame and that it is not their fault.
- Say you will take them seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by the child/young person/vulnerable adult, especially if they have a speech disability and/or differences in language.
- Keep questions to the absolute minimum necessary to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Do not confront the alleged abuser.
- Reassure the child/young person/vulnerable adult, but do not make promises of confidentiality or say you will keep it a secret.
- Explain what you'll do next.
- Make a full record and report what has been said, heard, and/or seen as soon as it is possible.

### **WHAT TO DO IF THERE ARE CONCERNS:**

- There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents/guardians/carers where there are concerns about the individual that they care for (i.e., child/vulnerable adult). Therefore, in most situations, it would be important to talk to the parents/guardians/carers to help clarify any initial concerns i.e., if an individual seems withdrawn, they may have experienced bereavement in the family.
- *However*, there are some circumstances in which a child/young person/vulnerable adult might be placed at even greater risk if such concerns are shared i.e., where a parent/guardian/carer may be responsible for the abuse or may not be able to respond to the situation appropriately.
- In these situations, or where concerns still exist, any suspicion, allegation, or incident of abuse must be reported to Coral Reef Swim School's Safeguarding Officer, Ellie Depledge-Barr, as soon as possible, and recorded.
- It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Officer, Ellie Depledge-Barr, to inform the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) without delay, or the Police if a child/young person/vulnerable adult is in immediate danger.

**RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE:**

- All Coral Reef Swim School staff have a responsibility to report concerns so that the appropriate individuals/agencies/services can make inquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child/young person/vulnerable adult. Listed below are the individuals/agencies/services and the order in which to report depending on the circumstance:
  1. If you have *any* concerns, please report *all* information to Coral Reef Swim School's Safeguarding Officer, **Ellie Depledge-Barr**. However, if the Safeguarding Officer is unavailable or the issue is in regard to the Safeguarding Officer, then you should report concerns to those listed below.
  2. If the Safeguarding Officer of Coral Reef Swim School is absent, it is about an issue in regard to the Safeguarding Officer, or you are reluctant to report an incident or disclosure (i.e., if the individual reporting is unclear as to whether abuse has occurred) you can contact the **Swimming Teaching Association's (STA) Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)** or the **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**. The Swimming Teaching Association's STA Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) can be contacted at the earliest possible time after the event or allegation and can advise you on the best course of action. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) works with all statutory agencies (i.e., Social Services, Police, NSPCC) and can also advise you on the best course of action.
  3. If the Safeguarding Officer of Coral Reef Swim School is absent and you need to report an incident/disclosure, or it is about an issue in regard to the Safeguarding Officer, you must contact either the **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** or **Social Services** and report your recorded information to them.
  4. If a child, young person, or vulnerable adult is in *immediate danger*, you must contact the **Police**.
  5. Once an allegation or concern has been raised with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Police, or Social Services, then the concern must be passed on to the Swimming Teaching Association (STA) via the Lead Child Protection Officer (LCPO).

**RECORDING AND REPORTING INFORMATION:**

- It is essential to make a detailed record of all information as this is passed to the Social Services department and/or Police. Therefore, the information should contain the following:
  1. The nature of the allegation.
  2. A description of any visible bruising or other injuries.
  3. The child/young person's/vulnerable adult's account, if he or she can give them, of what has happened and how any injuries (-physical or mental) have occurred.
  4. Any times, dates, or other relevant information.
  5. A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion, or hearsay.

- It is essential to note that when reporting the matter to Coral Reef Swim School's Safeguarding Officer, the Swimming Teaching Association's (STA) Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO), the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), or the Police, this should *not* be delayed by attempts to obtain more information.
- Wherever possible, referrals telephoned/emailed to Coral Reef Swim School's Safeguarding Officer, the Swimming Teaching Association's (STA) Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO), the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), or the Police, should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. You should make a record of the name and designation of the member of staff/officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed.
- The link below is the Swimming Teaching Association's (STA) incident report form which will help you ask the correct questions and record the appropriate information before sending it to the Swimming Teaching Association (STA) via the Lead Child Protection Officer (LCPO).

<https://www.sta.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/STA-Safeguarding-Incident-Report-Form-v21.1.pdf>

#### **ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A MEMBER OF THE STA:**

- This includes anyone working with children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults in a paid or voluntary capacity i.e., volunteers in clubs, club helpers, lifeguards, swimming teachers, and managers.
- It is crucial that those involved in swimming are aware that abuse has occurred within institutions and may occur within settings such as sport or social activities.
- Recent inquiries indicate that abuse, which takes place within a public setting, is rarely a one-off event, and that all allegations must be taken seriously, and the appropriate action *must* be taken.
- *Any* concerns for the welfare of a child, young person, or vulnerable adult arising from abuse or harassment by a member of staff or volunteer should be reported *immediately*.
- Where Coral Reef Swim School's Safeguarding Officer, Ellie Depledge-Barr, is informed of a situation where she is unsure about whether the allegation constitutes abuse or poor practice, and is unclear about what action to take, it is her responsibility to consult the Swimming Teaching Association's (STA) Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and/or gain advice from the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO). This is because this may be just one of a series of other instances which together cause a concern.
- It is essential that discussions about the situation are not discussed with colleagues as there is a need to protect human rights of all concerned, including the individual against who the allegation is made.

*Both the Swimming Teaching Association (STA) and Coral Reef Swim School would like to assure all staff that it would fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child, young person, or vulnerable adult.*

- Where there is a complaint of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer, there may be three types of investigation:
  1. A criminal investigation.
  2. A child protection investigation.
  3. A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the Police and Social Services investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

- If, following consideration the allegation is clearly about poor practice, then the Swimming Teaching Association (STA) will deal with this as a misconduct issue.
- Any suspicion that a child/young person/vulnerable adult has been abused by a member of Coral Reef Swim School, this *must* be reported to its Safeguarding Officer, Ellie Depledge-Barr, who will take such steps as she considers necessary to ensure the safety of the child/young person/vulnerable adult in question and any other child/young person/vulnerable adult who may be at risk.
- Coral Reef Swim School's Safeguarding Officer, Ellie Depledge-Barr, will refer the allegation to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO), who will involve the Police.
- The parents/guardians/carers of the child/young person/vulnerable adult will be contacted as soon as possible, following advice from the Social Services department.
- Coral Reef Swim School's Safeguarding Officer, Ellie Depledge-Barr, will then notify the Swimming Teaching Association's (STA) Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).
- Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.
- Coral Reef Swim School's Safeguarding Officer, Ellie Depledge-Barr, is a member of the Swimming Teaching Association (STA). If she is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to Swimming Teaching Association's (STA) Lead Child Protection Officer (LCPO) who is then responsible for taking the action outlined above.
- Irrespective of the findings of the Social Services or Police inquiries, Swimming Teaching Association (STA) must assess all individual cases under the appropriate misconduct/disciplinary and welfare procedures, to decide whether a member should be reinstated and how this can sensitively be handled.

*This decision may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the Swimming Teaching Association (STA) will reach a decision based upon the information that is available which could suggest that on a balance of probability it is more likely*

*than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of children/young people/vulnerable adults should always remain paramount.*

- Consideration should be given to what support may be appropriate to children/young people/vulnerable adults, parents/guardians/carers, and the members of staff.

### **GOOD PRACTICE IN THE CARE OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, AND VULNERABLE ADULTS:**

Situations for the abuse of children, young people, and vulnerable adults can be reduced following good practice. Additionally, this helps to protect staff and volunteers. Examples of good practice include:

- Always being publicly open when working children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Avoid situations where you are with an individual swimmer and are completely unobserved.
- Swimming teachers should ensure that where any form of manual support is required during lessons, it is provided openly and with the assent of the child/young person/vulnerable adult and the consent of the parent/guardian/carer. Written in *Coral Reef Swim School's Terms and Conditions* and *Coral Reef Swim School's Manual Handling Policy*, parents/guardians/carers are told, and therefore should be aware, that manual support will be utilised as a method of teaching to aid and support swimmers in water that is out of their depth, and/or to help with their progression. Nevertheless, swimming teachers should be *extremely* careful as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child/young person/vulnerable adult is constantly moving. Try and keep your hands visible at all times, and above the water's surface where possible. Additionally, swimming teachers should support participants by holding teaching aids, supporting the swimmer under their head, or holding the swimmers' hands/feet. *Please note, in the event of an emergency rescue, it may be necessary to retrieve a swimming quickly, without gaining permission.*
- Parents/guardians/carers should always take responsibility for the individual in which they care for (i.e., child/young person/vulnerable adult) in the changing rooms both prior to, and after lessons. Members of staff should not be required unless there is an accident and an individual requires medical attention. If there is any case, that is not stated on here, in which a child/young person/vulnerable adult needs to be supervised in the changing rooms, staff members should always work in pairs. Coral Reef Swim School encourages an open environment.
- Never take a child/young person/vulnerable adult alone in any car journeys, no matter how short.

Where cases arise where it is unavoidable that these things do happen, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation (I.E., Ellie Depledge-Barr and/or Jordan Dibble), as well as the child/young person/vulnerable adult's parents/guardians/carers. But you should *never*:

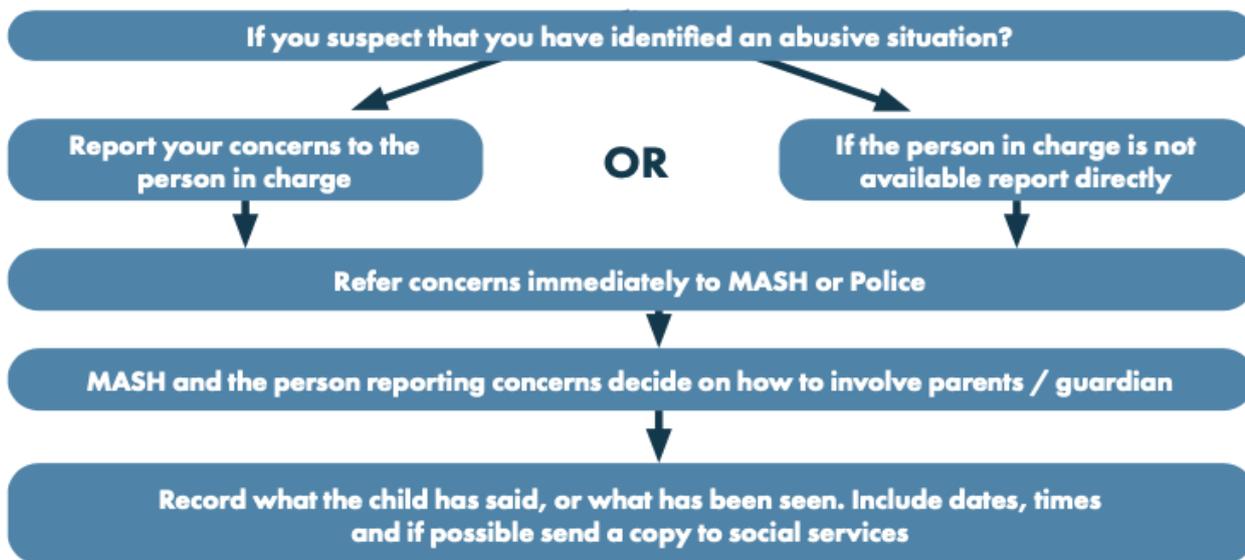
- Engage in rough, physical, or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.

- Share a room with a child/young person/vulnerable adult.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children or young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child/young person/vulnerable adult.
- Let allegations a child/young person/vulnerable adult makes to you go unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child/young person/vulnerable adult can do for themselves.
- Take a child/young person/vulnerable adult to your home where they will be alone with you.
- Have a child/young person/vulnerable adult stay at your home with you unsupervised.
- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with a child/young person/vulnerable adult away from others.
- Take still or movie photographs of children/young people/vulnerable adults without obtaining the parents/guardians/consent in writing.

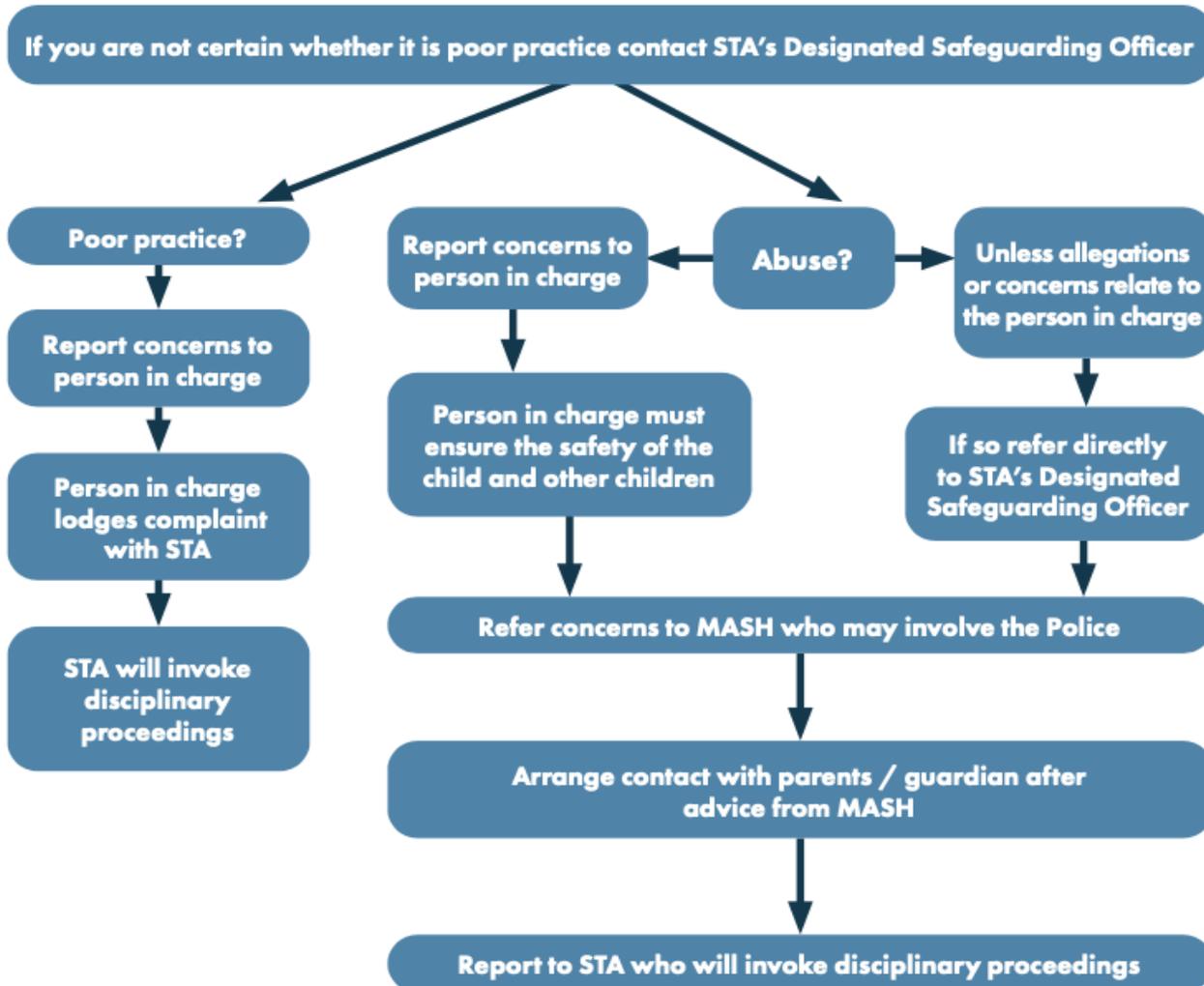
It may be sometimes necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, young people, or vulnerable adults, particularly if they are young or have disabilities. These tasks should only be carried out with a full understanding and written consent of parents/guardians/carers, and the child, young person or vulnerable adult involved. There is a need to be responsive to a child/young person/vulnerable adult's reactions and if a child/young person/vulnerable adult is fully dependent upon you, talk with them about what you are doing and give them choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact of lifting or assisting a child/young person/vulnerable adult to carry out particular activities.

If during your care of a child/young person/vulnerable adult you accidentally hurt them, the child/young person/vulnerable adult seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report *any* such incident as soon as possible to another colleague and make a note of it. Parents/guardians/carers should *always* be informed of the incident.

### What to do if you have concerns about child abuse



### What to do if you have concerns about child abuse by a member of the STA



### **3. CONTACT INFORMATION**

#### **KEY CONTACT INFORMATION:**

- Safeguarding Officer at Coral Reef Swim School: Ellie Depledge-Barr.  
Telephone Contact Number: 07522 282654.  
Out of Office Hours Contact: 07827 885556.  
E-mail Address: [crswimschool@outlook.com](mailto:crswimschool@outlook.com) – please reference the email as ‘Safeguarding Concern’ and mark this with high importance on its settings.  
Link: <https://www.crswimschool.co.uk> – the policy will be available online from 05<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) at the Swimming Teaching Association (STA):  
Telephone Contact Number: 01922 748642.  
Head Office Contact: 01922 645097.  
E-mail Address: [childprotection@sta.co.uk](mailto:childprotection@sta.co.uk).  
Link: <https://www.sta.co.uk/policies/safeguarding-policy/>
- The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in Cardiff:  
Telephone Contact Number 1: 02920 536490.  
Telephone Contact Number 2: 02922 330888.  
Out of Office Hours Contact: 02920 788570.  
E-mail Address: N/A.  
Link: <https://www.cardiffandvalersb.co.uk/children/contact-childrens-board/reporting-concerns/>
- Police:  
Emergency Telephone Contact Number: 999.  
Non-emergency Telephone Contact Number: 101.  
E-mail Address: N/A.  
Link 1: <https://digitalservices.south-wales.police.uk/en/all-wales-prevent-partners-referral-form-english/>  
Link 2: <https://www.police.uk/pu/contact-the-police/report-a-crime-incident/>
- The Swimming Teaching Association’s (STA) Lead Child Protection Officer (LCPO):  
Telephone Contact Number: 01922 645097.  
Out of Office Hours Contact: 07817 640189.  
E-mail Address: [childprotection@sta.co.uk](mailto:childprotection@sta.co.uk)

Link: <https://www.sta.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/STA-Duty-of-Care-26th-October-2013.pdf>

**OTHER IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION:**

- Cardiff Local Authority Social Care Services (Adults):

Telephone Contact Number: 02920 872087.

Telephone Contact Number (Adults): 02922 330888.

Telephone Contact Number (Children): 02922 536490.

Out of Office Hours Contact: 02920 788570.

Link: <https://111.wales.nhs.uk/localservices/ViewLocalService.aspx?id=63322&s=Social%20Care%20and%20Social%20Services%20>

Link (Adults): [Adults \(cardiff.gov.uk\)](https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/adults)

Link (Children): [Children \(cardiff.gov.uk\)](https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/children)

Out of Hours Link: [Cardiff and Vale Regional Safeguarding Board - Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board \(cardiffandvalersb.co.uk\)](https://www.cardiffandvalersb.co.uk)

- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) child protection line (24/7 service):

Telephone Contact Number: 08088 005000.

E-mail Address: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

Link: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/wales#article-top>

- National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC):

Telephone Contact Number: 08088 010331

E-mail Address: [support@napac.org.uk](mailto:support@napac.org.uk)

Link: <https://napac.org.uk/contact/>

**4. SIGNATURE OF UNDERSTANDING**

Please sign here to state that you have thoroughly read the document and understand the importance of your role and responsibilities as a member of staff at Coral Reef Swim School to safeguard and protect the well-being of *all* children, young people, and vulnerable adults who attend swimming lessons. Signing this document also shows that you are aware of the correct processes and procedures if a concern or incident is to arise, and you will follow this to the best of your ability. Please do not hesitate to ask either Ellie Depledge-Barr or Jordan Dibble, any questions you may have about the policy.

**PRINTED NAME OF STAFF MEMBER:**

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**SIGNATURE OF STAFF MEMBER:**

.....

**DATE:**

.....

**PRINTED NAME OF OWNER/S OF CORAL REEF SWIM SCHOOL:**

.....

**SIGNATURE OF OWNER/S OF CORAL REEF SWIM SCHOOL:**

.....

**DATE:**

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