



Hatfield Swimming Club Welfare Policies in line with Wavepower 2016-19 issued 1 April 2018. This policy supersedes any previous versions.

Whistleblowing

The concept of whistleblowing is important in any organisation that is committed to maintaining appropriate levels of safeguarding and good practice. Whistleblowing allows individuals to raise the alarm on any potential incident of poor practice or misconduct by members and employees.

Hatfield Swimming Club is committed to developing a culture that is safe and encourages all those involved in aquatics to raise concerns of poor and/or unacceptable practice, breaches in safeguarding and/or incidents of abuse.

When is it necessary to whistleblow?

A member or employee may witness or be told about a situation of poor practice, a failure to safeguard or even an incident of abuse within the sport in which a colleague is implicated.

While you may be the first person to become aware of an issue, it is not always easy to raise a concern as to do so may appear to be disloyal to your colleague(s) and you may be fearful that you will be victimised or disadvantaged as a result of taking such action.

That is an understandable fear, but you must remember that all children have a right to be protected and that it is often the most vulnerable children who are targeted and who are least able to act or defend themselves or disclose what is happening. They need you and others like you to protect their wellbeing and safeguard them from harm or potential harm.

Everyone involved in aquatics has a responsibility to raise concerns appropriately to individuals who can act upon them whether that is the welfare officer, the ASA Child Safeguarding Team or the statutory agencies.

Hatfield Swimming Club acknowledges that 'blowing the whistle' on a colleague or friend will be difficult but it is important you do so rather than allow a child to become or remain at risk. Once the concern has been raised, the welfare officer, the ASA Child Safeguarding Team and/or the statutory agencies will take action as deemed appropriate.

Reasons for whistleblowing

Every member, member's parent(s), employee and volunteer in the ASA has a responsibility to raise concerns about potential poor practice and abuse/unacceptable behaviour in order to:

- Prevent the problem increasing.
- Protect or reduce the risk to others.
- Prevent becoming a party to the concern by lack of appropriate action.



Hatfield Swimming Club Welfare Policies in line with Wavepower 2016-19 issued 1 April 2018. This policy supersedes any previous versions.

Why is it difficult to whistleblow?

You may feel worried that:

- You will be starting a chain of events you have no control over.
- To do so will be disruptive to the organisation, the young person/s and/or yourself.
- You may have gotten it wrong and the concern will prove to be unfounded.
- You will not be listened to or believed.

At each stage, concerns are managed by professionals, with a view to independently assess the information, and act in the best interests of any children that may be involved. Concerns are taken seriously, and if proved unfounded, any action taken is designed not to disrupt children and families unnecessarily. Reporting concerns will not start a process that cannot be halted, if unfounded.

Hatfield Swimming Club assures its members/coaches/volunteers/parents that they will be treated fairly and all concerns will be properly considered. If you act in good faith in reporting a concern, even if the suspicion is unfounded, you will be supported and no action will be taken against you. However, if it is proven the concern has been raised maliciously to cause harm to others, you may be liable to action under the Club's complaints and disciplinary processes.

Referring the concern

- If your concern is regarding another member or the parent of a member, you must refer the matter to the welfare officer, the county or regional welfare officer, the ASA Child Safeguarding Team or the statutory agencies.
- If Hatfield Swimming Club receives a concern from a third party regarding a member of an ASA organisation, or the parent of a member, you should try to obtain the following information:
 - ◆ Their name, address and contact details.
 - ◆ The names of all the individuals involved.
 - ◆ If they have evidence of the alleged concern or if not what it is that leads them to believe that abuse/poor practice is happening.
 - ◆ How they became aware of the concern.

The information should then be referred to the welfare officer, or the county or regional welfare officer if appropriate, the ASA Child Safeguarding Team or the statutory agencies who will consider what action to take.

- If you are an employee rather than a member or officer of the organisation, you should report the concern to your line manager or you can contact Public Concern at Work on 0203 117 2520 or via whistle@pcaw.org.uk.

When referring the concern, do not:

- Try to deal with the concern yourself.
- Inform the person about whom the concern has been raised.
- Inform any other members or employees of the concern other than those outlined above.
- Commence your own investigation.
- Annotate or remove evidence received.
- Delay in reporting the concerns.



Hatfield Swimming Club Welfare Policies in line with Wavepower 2016-19 issued 1 April 2018. This policy supersedes any previous versions.

Also, do not assume that:

- “All is well or it would have been noted earlier.”
- “It does not matter” or “no harm will arise.”
- “I should ignore it as it’s not my responsibility.”

What happens when you have raised a concern in good faith?

- The concern you raise will be treated in confidence and will be shared only on a need to-know basis.
- You will be given updates on how the enquiry is progressing if it is possible to do so.
- Your welfare officer, the county or regional welfare officer and the ASA have a responsibility to protect you from harassment of any kind that results from your disclosure.
- If the matter is proven/found on the balance of probabilities to be so then appropriate action will be taken against the individual(s) concerned.
- If the matter is unproven/unfounded on the balance of probabilities to not have occurred, providing you raised the concern in good faith, no action will be taken against you.
- Malicious allegations will be considered as a disciplinary offence.

Feedback

Every effort will be made to provide feedback to you on the outcome and action taken on the matter you referred, but how much detail can be reported back to you will vary according to the nature and result of the investigation. Wherever possible, Hatfield Swimming Club will ensure you have notice while the matter is ongoing and when it has been