



SWPSA PARENT AND PLAYER SAFEGUARDING GUIDE

Schools Water Polo South Africa

Effective May 2026

OUR COMMITMENT

SWPSA is committed to providing a safe, respectful and supportive environment for every player. The welfare and safety of children come before competition, results or performance.

SWPSA does not tolerate abuse, grooming, bullying, harassment, exploitation, intimidation or other unsafe behaviour involving children.

This Guide is a simple summary of the **SWPSA Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** and is intended to help players and parents understand their rights, responsibilities and what to do if something doesn't feel right.

1. EVERY PLAYER HAS THE RIGHT TO:

- Feel safe, respected and valued.
- Participate in water polo free from abuse, bullying and harassment.
- Be treated fairly and with dignity.
- Have their privacy and personal boundaries respected.
- Be listened to when they raise a concern.
- Speak up without fear of retaliation.
- Have their welfare prioritized over sporting performance.
- Know who they can approach if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

If something feels wrong, you have the right to speak up.

2. WHAT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE?

SWPSA considers the following unacceptable:

- Physical, emotional or sexual abuse.
- Bullying or cyberbullying.
- Hazing, initiation practices or intimidation.
- Grooming or inappropriate relationships with players.
- Sexualised conversations, messages, images or behaviour.
- Threatening, humiliating or degrading behaviour.
- Unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact.
- Discrimination or harassment.
- Adults using alcohol or drugs while responsible for players.
- Secretive or inappropriate communication between adults and minors.
- Sharing inappropriate photographs, videos or information about players.
- Any behaviour that places a child at risk.



3. ADULTS WORKING WITH PLAYERS

Coaches, managers, officials, referees, volunteers and other adults working with players are expected to:

- Put player welfare first.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Treat every player with dignity and respect.
- Avoid favouritism and inappropriate relationships.
- Use appropriate communication channels.
- Respect player privacy.
- Report safeguarding concerns.
- Act as positive role models.

Adults should avoid unnecessary one-to-one situations with minors and should never engage in romantic or sexual relationships with players.

4. ONLINE & SOCIAL MEDIA SAFETY

Communication involving players should be:

Professional • Respectful • Appropriate • Transparent

Adults should use approved communication channels and, where appropriate, include parents/guardians or another responsible adult.

Players and adults must not:

- Send or request inappropriate images.
- Engage in sexualised communication.
- Bully or harass others online.
- Use social media to groom, manipulate or intimidate players.
- Share private information about another player without appropriate permission.

Photographs and videos of players must be used appropriately and must never be used to exploit, humiliate or place a child at risk.

5. TOURS, TRAVEL & ACCOMMODATION

When players travel with SWPSA:

- Appropriate supervision must be provided.
- Parents / guardians should receive relevant travel information.
- Clear accommodation and rooming arrangements should be established.
- Curfews and safety procedures must be followed.
- Player privacy must be respected.
- Players must know who they can approach if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- Transport arrangements should be authorised and transparent.



6. IF SOMETHING HAPPENS — SPEAK UP

Players

If something happens that makes you feel uncomfortable, frightened, pressured or unsafe:

Tell someone you trust.

This could be:

- Your parent or guardian.
- Your coach or team manager.
- A SWPSA official.
- The SWPSA Safeguarding Officer.
- Another trusted adult.

You **do not** need to be certain that something is abuse before raising a concern. **You will not be blamed for speaking up.**

Parents & Guardians

If your child tells you about something concerning:

1. **Stay calm and listen.**
2. **Take the concern seriously.**
3. Reassure your child that they did the right thing by telling you.
4. Do not promise absolute confidentiality.
5. Avoid confronting the person accused.
6. Do not attempt to investigate the matter yourself.
7. Record relevant information as soon as possible.
8. Report the concern through the appropriate safeguarding channel.

If a child is in immediate danger, seek emergency assistance and notify the appropriate authorities immediately.

7. HOW TO REPORT A CONCERN

Safeguarding concerns can be reported to:

SWPSA Safeguarding Officer

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Alternative SWPSA Contact

Name/Position: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____



Concerns may also be raised with:

- A SWPSA Executive Committee member.
- Tournament Director.
- Team Manager.
- Appropriate child-protection or law-enforcement authority.

You can report:

- Something that happened to you.
- Something you have witnessed.
- Something another player has told you.
- Something that makes you concerned about a child's safety.
- Suspected abuse or grooming.
- Bullying or harassment.
- Inappropriate adult behaviour.
- Unsafe conditions or practices.

You do not have to investigate the concern yourself.

8. WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A REPORT?

SWPSA will take safeguarding concerns seriously and respond as promptly and appropriately as possible.

Depending on the circumstances, SWPSA may:

- Assess the immediate safety of the child.
- Put protective measures in place.
- Restrict or suspend an individual's participation where appropriate.
- Refer the matter to the player's school or relevant sporting body.
- Refer the matter to child-protection or law-enforcement authorities where appropriate or legally required.
- Initiate disciplinary procedures.
- Provide appropriate support to affected participants.

Information will be treated confidentially **where reasonably possible**. However, information may need to be shared where necessary to protect a child, comply with legal obligations or involve the appropriate authorities.

9. NO RETALIATION

No player, parent, coach, official or other participant should be punished, intimidated or victimised for raising a safeguarding concern in good faith.

Speaking up is not causing trouble.

It is helping to keep our players and our sport safe.



10. OUR SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

PLAYERS

Respect others. Speak up. Look out for your teammates.

PARENTS

Listen. Support. Report concerns.

COACHES & STAFF

Protect. Respect. Report. Lead by example.

SWPSA

Listen. Act. Protect. Support.

REMEMBER

IF IT DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT, SPEAK UP.

You will be listened to.

You will be taken seriously.

Your safety matters.

For the full requirements and procedures, please refer to the “SWPSA Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy”.

SWPSA Executive Committee

Effective: 4 May 2026

Policy Review: Periodically