

Safe Recruitment Policy

The Swim England Safe Recruitment Policy applies to both voluntary and paid staff. It states that all staff and volunteers for any Swim England organisation should go through an appropriate vetting process prior to their appointment in order to establish their suitability to work with children.

Guidelines on the recruitment and selection of paid staff and volunteers working with children These best practice guidelines were developed by the Football Association.

We have amended these guidelines so that they relate to Swim England to provide organisations with guidance and advice on the recruitment of volunteers and paid staff.

In the recruitment of paid staff and volunteers, the wellbeing of all children should be paramount. As an organisation we are committed to providing a safe environment for children in our organisations and the requirements of the recruitment process outlined below will assist organisations to ensure best practice is implemented to protect children whenever a volunteer is appointed.

Whilst Swim England acknowledges that the vast majority of people applying to work with children in our organisations are doing so with the best of intentions, our experience has shown that those less suitable will also apply and it is only through sound recruitment practice that they can be screened out.

This guidance is aimed at assisting those who are recruiting individuals who would work with children but can be used for all recruitment purposes, including individuals who would work with adults who are deemed vulnerable.

Role profile

The relevant person(s) in the organisation should draw up a “role profile” or job description in order to identify the main responsibilities of the job that is being recruited for. They will need to clearly identify the skills and experience required to fulfil the role and draw up a person specification.

A recruitment process must also be developed by each organisation to ensure every applicant is treated in a fair and consistent manner.

Meeting and interviewing the applicant

It is important that all applicants are interviewed, and that the information obtained on the application form is explored appropriately. Questions asked of the applicant should be prepared in advance and it is important that each applicant has the opportunity to discuss their experiences and qualifications for the role. They should also be asked for examples of how they would manage some hypothetical child safeguarding situations such as a child not being collected after a swimming session and what they would do in that circumstance.

In assessing the applicant's suitability, you should:

- Consider their relevant qualifications and experience.
- Consider their previous experience (if any) of working with children, inside or outside of one of our sport environments.
- Consider their attitudes and commitment to child safeguarding.
- Ask them if they have ever been refused work that involved having contact with children.
- Ask them if there is anything else that the organisation should know that could affect their suitability to work with children.

References

At least two references should be obtained even if the person is known to the organisation. References should not be from a person who is related to the applicant.

One of the references should be from the applicant's current employer and, if possible, one reference from a sports organisation or club which they have been involved with.

If the applicant has not previously been involved with a sports organisation or club of any kind, then the applicant should be asked to provide a reference from someone who knows them personally, who has some knowledge of their attitude to children's wellbeing and child safeguarding. Both references should contain a statement to illustrate that the referee is aware of the post the applicant is applying for.

All references should be followed up by contacting the referee prior to any offer of appointment being made.

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) process

The Welfare Officer is responsible for coordinating the DBS checks for our organisation as part of the safe recruitment procedure.

Further information on DBS checks can be found on pages 47-52 of Wavepower 2020-2023. As soon as an applicant has been DBS cleared, you will receive the clearance letter from Swim England to confirm this.

Recruitment decisions

Organisations are required to consider all the information they have about an applicant at each stage of the recruitment process. The information to consider will include:

- The application form.
- The interview.
- All qualifications seen and confirmed.
- The references including the follow up prior to recruitment.
- The outcome of the DBS check.

The decision can then be made either to appoint the applicant and agree a start date or to reject the application.

All new staff/volunteers must abide by Wavepower and be registered members of the organisation and Swim England.

Post-recruitment

It is important that once a new role has been filled, follow up action is taken. This includes:

- The expectations, role and responsibilities of the post should be clarified and put in writing to the new recruit.
- The recruit should be formally made aware of and be asked to sign up to and abide by Wavepower. All new coaches, teachers and poolside helpers should be given a copy of Section 3 of Wavepower which can be downloaded from swimming.org.
- If they have not yet attended a Swim England approved child safeguarding course, then the club should ensure they attend a relevant course within three months of appointment.
- Any other training needs should be established, and a plan made to meet those needs within an appropriate timescale.
- It is suggested that a period of mentoring, supervision and observation or monitoring should be put into place to support the new recruit.