

STA Swimming Teaching Code of Practice



Safety. Qualified.
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STA Policies

Generic Teaching Information

STA Award - Baby and Pre-School

STA Award in Swimming Teaching

STA Certificate in Swimming Teaching

STA Award - People with Disabilities



Foreword

There is often confusion and a lack of understanding with regards to what regulations, legislation or recommendations swimming teachers should and should not follow. To support and clarify these aspects for our members, we are incredibly proud to launch the STA Code of Practice.

This is a document that states clearly, in black and white, the requirements, qualification competences, teaching ratios etc. for a STA swimming teacher. For ease of use we have also colour coded the document so you can easily find the specific section you need.

Furthermore if you have insurance through STA / Ault Insurance the information here will explain exactly what you are required to do, to ensure compliance.



Dave Candler
Chief Executive Officer



Kaylë Burgham
Technical Manager
for Aquatics

As an organisation committed to supporting our members, we have created this Code of Practice because we want to ensure that you are delivering high quality swimming lessons and that you are insured and protected when doing so.

If you go over and above these requirements then fantastic! But, if you are not meeting these requirements and something goes wrong, please be warned that you will have a hard time justifying this to the insurance company.

Finally, a special thanks to all the working group members who supported us in the making of this Code of Practice.

The Membership Insurance cover is provided for Qualified and Associate members of the Swimming Teachers Association Limited (STA) while acting in an individual capacity in accordance with the individual STA member's qualification or qualification recognised by the STA. Each qualification incorporates many aspects of the new Code of Practice, and therefore, to ensure that you remain fully covered, you must ensure that you comply with the new STA Code of Practice



Mark Wedgbury
Managing Director
Ault Insurance Brokers



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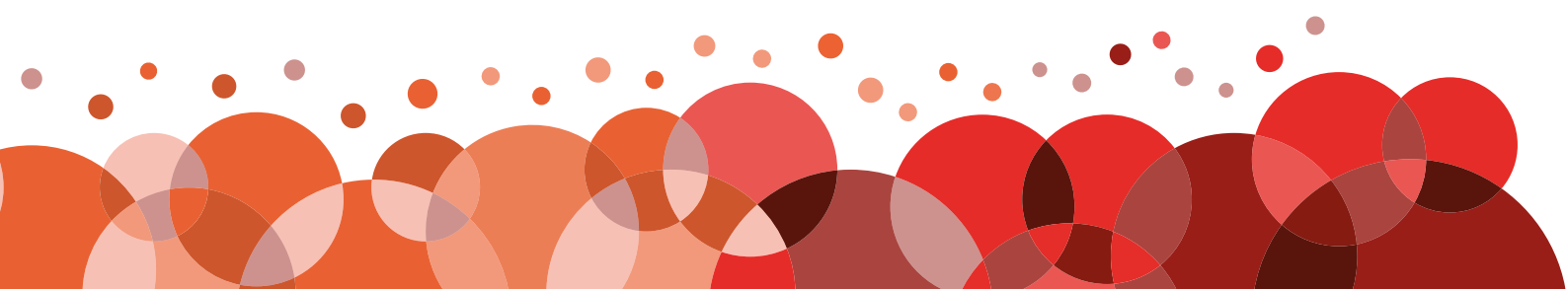
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STA Policies Code of Ethics



1. Safety

- 1.1. The paramount consideration for all STA members should be safety at all times.
 - Safety of learners
 - Safety of clients
 - Safety of the general public
 - Safety of the member.
- 1.2. Members must ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to provide a safe environment and all activities are in accordance with the appropriate regulations, or best practice if there are no regulations. They must be appropriate for the age, experience and ability of the participants.

2. General

- 2.1. Members must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone as equals at all times.
- 2.2. Members must abide by the Equal Opportunities Policy of the Association; STA will not condone or permit harassment or discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability, political or religious belief.
- 2.3. Child abuse is a criminal act which will not be tolerated by STA. Members should be fully aware of the child protection procedures.
- 2.4. Members, when acting in a professional capacity, must display the highest standards of behaviour and appearance and must adhere to all STA policies.
- 2.5. Members inevitably gather a great deal of personal information about learners in the course of a working relationship. Members and learners must reach agreement as to what is regarded as confidential information, i.e. not divulged to a third party without the express approval of the learner or parent / guardian. Confidentiality does not preclude the disclosure of information where the member is in an alleged breach of this Code of Ethics.
- 2.6. Advertising by members in respect of qualifications or services shall be accurate and professionally restrained and shall not display affiliation with an organisation that falsely implies sponsorship or accreditation by that organisation.
- 2.7. Members should refrain from public criticism of fellow members; differences of opinion should be dealt with on a personal basis and more serious disputes should be referred to STA.
- 2.8. Members should regularly seek ways of increasing their professional development and self-awareness, welcome evaluation of their work by colleagues and be able to account to learners, employers and colleagues for their actions.
- 2.9. Members should only act within their qualification.
- 2.10. Members should ensure that they have adequate Public Liability insurance. Fully paid members are insured by the Association provided that they act within their qualification; if a member acts outside their qualification they may not be covered for insurance.
- 2.11. All members who work with children or vulnerable adults must obtain a DBS clearance. Many employers provide clearance as part of the employment process.
- 2.12. All members who employ staff to work with children or vulnerable adults must obtain a DBS clearance for their staff.

— In 2.11 and 2.12 DBS means **Disclosure and Barring Service** in England and Wales, **Disclosure Scotland** in Scotland and **Access Northern Ireland** in Northern Ireland.

3. Swimming, Lifeguard and First Aid Teachers

When acting as teachers of swimming, lifeguarding or first aid:

- 3.1. Members must place the wellbeing and safety of the learners / candidates within the class / course above the development of performance. They should follow all guidelines laid down by the Governing Bodies, Leisure Centres, Local Authorities or such other bodies who control swimming lessons / courses.
- 3.2. Members must develop an appropriate working relationship with their learners / candidates, based on mutual trust and respect.
- 3.3. Members must encourage and guide their learners / candidates throughout each lesson / course.
- 3.4. Members who teach swimming, lifeguarding or first aid must hold a recognised teaching qualification.
- 3.5. Members must ensure that the activities they direct are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the learners / candidates.
- 3.6. Members from the outset should clarify with learners / candidates (and where appropriate with their guardians) exactly what format the lessons / course will take and what is expected of the learners / candidate. They should also clarify what fees, if any, are payable.
- 3.7. Members should co-operate fully with others involved in the lessons / course (e.g. pool management, other teachers) in the best interests of the learners / candidate.
- 3.8. Members who run training courses under the auspices of STA must comply with the appropriate rules and regulations of the Association.
- 3.9. Members who receive fees or other monies from candidates or learners must keep proper accounts. Any fees collected that are due to STA must be paid promptly.

4. Violations of the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

- 4.1. Allegations that a member has breached any of the articles of the Code of Ethics must be made in writing to the Chief Executive of the STA. The Board of Trustees will consider any complaints in accordance with Articles of Association of the STA. The powers contained under these clauses include suspension from and exclusion from membership of the STA.
- 4.2. Where the complainant alleges that a member may be in breach of STA safeguarding policy, the member will be suspended from membership pending a full investigation.
- 4.3. A member found guilty under 4.2 will be permanently excluded from membership of STA.



Safeguarding Policy



Introduction

It is widely accepted that it is the responsibility of every adult to safeguard the wellbeing of children. Child abuse can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation and although it is important to understand these feelings, you must ensure they do not interfere with your judgement surrounding the necessary action required.

Abuse and poor practice can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with children in order to harm them. Everyone working in swimming either in a paid or voluntary capacity, together with those working in affiliated organisations have a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of children and promoting good practice.

A swimming teacher, lifeguard, lifesaver or volunteer may have regular contact with children and be a very important link in identifying cases where a child may be at risk or in need. When establishing guidelines concerning the protection of children, it is important to recognise that the organisation is both morally and legally obliged to provide the highest possible standard of care.

STA recognises the responsibility to:

- Safeguard and promote the interests and wellbeing of children
- Take all reasonable practical steps to protect them from harm, discrimination, or degrading treatment
- Respect their rights, wishes and feelings.

Child protection procedures can:

- Offer safeguards to the children and to members of staff, volunteers and those in affiliated organisations
- Help to maintain the professionalism and the standards of practice that are associated with the members of the STA.

We recognise that any procedure is only as effective as the ability and skill of those who operate it. We are committed to:

- Proper recruitment policies
- The provision of support and appropriate training
- Clear processes for recognition and responding to concerns
- Working together with parents / guardians and other organisations to ensure that the needs and the welfare of children remain paramount.

Principles

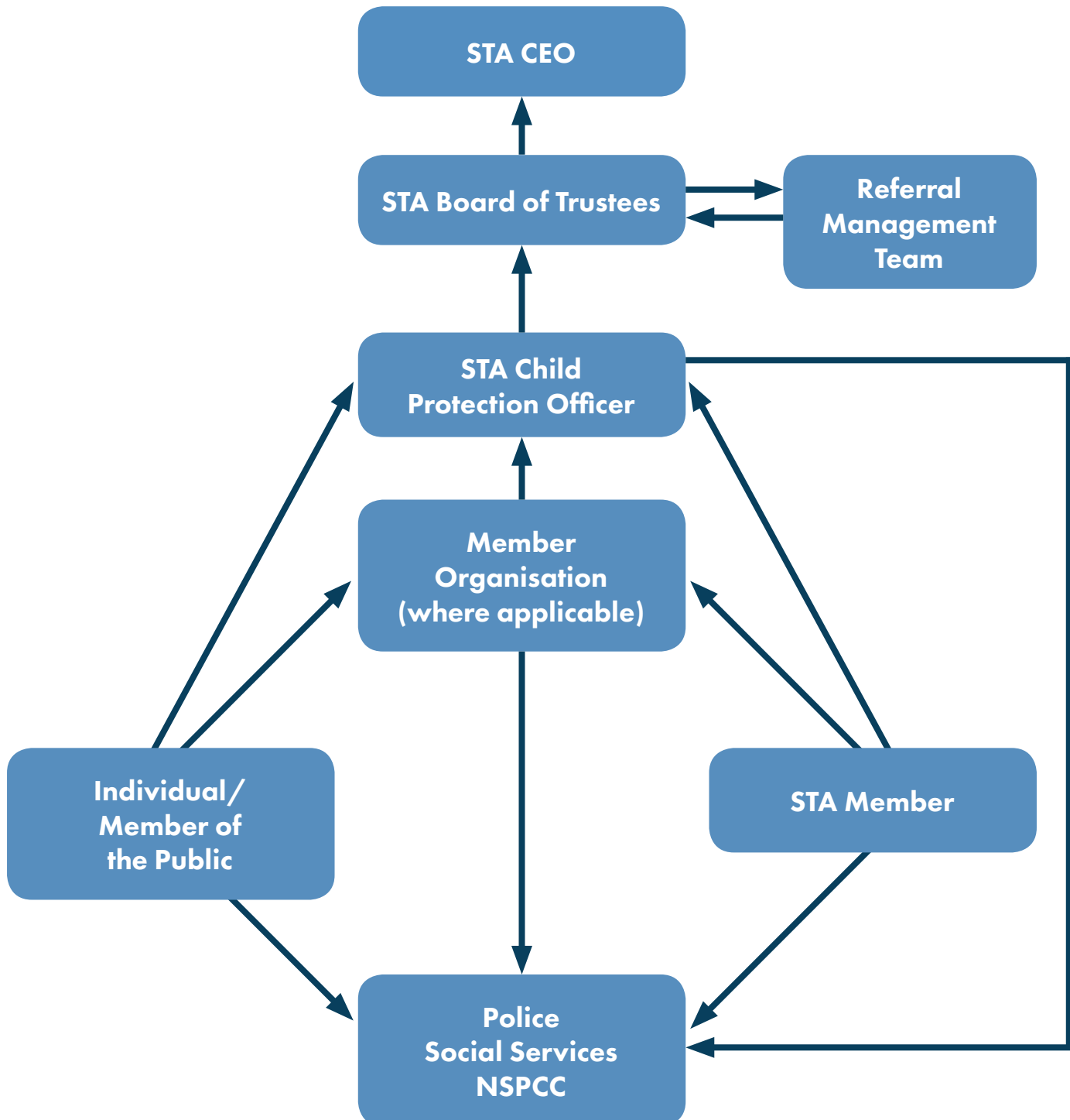
- The child's welfare is paramount
- All children whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and / or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously; and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Anyone under the age of 17 years (Scotland under 16 years) should be considered as a child for the purposes of this document.

Working in partnership with children and their parents / guardians is essential for the protection of the children.

STA recognises the statutory responsibility of the social services department to ensure the welfare of children. It is committed to working together with the local safeguarding children's board (LSCB) and to complying with its procedures.

Recognition of Abuse

Even for those who have experience working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. STA acknowledges that their staff, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, are not experts at such recognition. It therefore expects them to report any concern they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the necessary person in charge, as follows:



It is the responsibility of these people to ensure that appropriate advice is obtained from the local Social Services department or the NSPCC. If the necessary person is not available, or the concern is about the person in charge, the individual in receipt of the information will contact the Social Services direct.

Indications that a child is being abused could 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 describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him / her
- Someone else - a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of another child
- Unexplained changes in behaviour - e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Engages in sexually explicit behaviour in 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.

It must be recognised that the list above is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. **It is not the responsibility of those working in swimming to decide whether child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.**

Forms of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Where adults, or young people, physically hurt or injure children by hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting or by giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison. Attempted suffocation or drowning also comes within this category. In sports situations, physical abuse might occur when the nature and intensity of training disregard the capacity of the child's immature and growing body.

Sexual Abuse

Girls and boys are abused by adults, both male and female, and by other young people who use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse, fondling. Showing children pornographic material is also a form of sexual abuse, as is the taking of inappropriate photographs of children.

Swimming or related activities, which might involve physical contact with children, could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. The power of the teacher over young learners, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing.

Emotional Abuse

Persistent lack of love and affection, where a child may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the child very nervous and withdrawn. Emotional abuse also occurs when there is constant overprotection, which prevents children from socialising.

Emotional abuse in sport might include situations where children are subjected to unrealistic pressure by the parent or coach, or bullied in order to consistently perform to high expectations.

Neglect

Where adults fail to meet a child's basic needs like food or warm clothing. Children might also be constantly left alone or unsupervised. Adults may additionally fail to, or refuse to, give children love and affection; this could be seen to be emotional neglect.

Neglect in a sport situation could include a teacher not ensuring children are safe, or exposing them to undue cold.

Bullying

Although not a specific form of abuse, it does involve abusive behaviour. Bullying can occur face to face or in a more subtle manner such as through electronic methods like text messaging and social media. Bullying may not only be physical, sexual or neglectful in nature but also emotionally damaging.

The Effects of Abuse

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects can be so damaging, that if not treated, they may follow an individual into adulthood.

There have been a number of studies which suggest children and people with disabilities are at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereo-typing, prejudice, discrimination, isolation, and a powerlessness to protect themselves, or to adequately communicate that abuse has occurred. Children from ethnic minorities, who may also be experiencing racial discrimination, may be doubly powerless.

Listening to the Child

If a child says or indicates that he or she is being abused, or information is obtained which gives concern that a child is being abused, the person receiving this information should:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child
 - Tell the child they are not to blame and that it was right to tell someone
 - Take what the child says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child who is very young, has 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
 - Reassure the child, but do not make promises of confidentiality which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments
 - Make a full record of what had been said, heard and / or seen as soon as possible.
-

Responding to Suspicions or Allegations of Child Abuse

STA members are not responsible for determining if child abuse is taking place. However, they do have a responsibility to report concerns so that appropriate agencies can then make inquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child.

Whilst STA acknowledges the importance of the role of statutory agencies involved in children's welfare (social services, police, NSPCC), it appreciates that there may be some reluctance to report directly to these agencies, especially if the person reporting is unclear as to whether abuse has occurred. As a result of this, and in line with the STA's duty of care, STA have a Child Protection Officer (CPO), who should be contacted at the earliest possible time after the event or allegation. The CPO can then liaise directly with statutory agencies and assist the organisation that made the report.

The social services department has a statutory duty under the Children Act 1989 to ensure the welfare of a child. When a child protection referral is made, its staff have a legal responsibility to investigate. This may involve talking to the child, family and gathering information from other people who know the child. Inquiries may be carried out jointly with the police.

What to do if there are concerns:

1. There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents or guardians where there are concerns about their children. Therefore, in most situations, it would be important to talk to parents or guardians to help clarify any initial concerns. For example, if a child seems withdrawn, they may have experienced bereavement in the family.
2. However, there are circumstances in which a child might be placed at even greater risk were such concerns to be shared, e.g. where a parent or guardian may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately.
3. In these situations, or where concerns still exist, any suspicion, allegation, or incident of abuse must be reported and recorded to the person in charge as soon as possible.
4. It is the responsibility of the person in charge to inform the social services department without delay. If a person in charge is not available, the person discovering or being informed of the abuse should immediately contact the social services department or the police. If you are not sure about what to do, you can contact STA Child Protection Officer on 07817 640 189 or childprotection@sta.co.uk or NSPCC.

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000 (24 hour service)

Recording and Information

Information passed to the social services department or the police must be as helpful as possible. The information should contain the following:

- The nature of the allegation
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- The child's account, if he or she can give them, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred
- Any times, dates, or other relevant information
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion, or hearsay.

Reporting the matter to the police or social services department should not however be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. Once an allegation or concern has been raised with the police, social services or the NSPCC then the concern must be passed on to STA through the Child Protection Officer. Wherever possible, referrals telephoned to the social services department should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. A record should also be made of the name and designation of the social services member of staff or police officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed.

Allegations of Abuse against Members of the STA

This would include anyone working with children in a paid or voluntary capacity. For example, volunteers in clubs, club helpers, tutors on training camps, lifeguards and swimming teachers.

Child abuse can and does occur outside the family setting. Although it is a sensitive and difficult issue, child abuse has occurred within institutions and may occur within other settings, for example, in sport or other social activities. Recent inquiries indicate that abuse, which takes place within a public setting, is rarely a one-off event. It is crucial that those involved in swimming are aware of this possibility and that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action taken.

The person in charge may be informed of situations where they are unsure about whether the allegation constitutes abuse or not, and are therefore unclear about what action to take. There may be circumstances where allegations are about poor practice rather than abuse. In this instance, those responsible should always consult STA's Child Protection Officer and avoid discussions with colleagues as there is a need to protect the human rights of all concerned, including the individual against who the allegation is made. Do not hesitate to gain advice from social services, STA's Child Protection Officer or the NSPCC where there is any doubt. This is important as it may just be one series of other instances which together cause concern. It is acknowledged that feelings generated by the discovery surrounding a member of staff or volunteer potentially abusing a child, will raise concerns among other staff or volunteers, including the difficulties inherent in reporting such matters. However, it is important that any concerns for the welfare of the child arising from abuse or harassment by a member of staff or volunteer should be reported immediately.

The STA would want to assure all staff and members 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.

Where there is a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, 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 STA will deal with this as a misconduct issue
- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by a member will be reported to a person in charge who will take such steps as he or she considers necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk
- The designated person will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police
- The parents or guardian of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department
- The person in charge should also notify STA's Chief Executive and STA's Child Protection Officer
- Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned
- If the person in charge is the subject of the suspicion / allegation and is a member of the STA, the report must be made to STA's Child Protection Officer who is then responsible for taking the action outlined above
- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries, 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 be handled sensitively. This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, 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 should always remain paramount
- Consideration should be given to what support may be appropriate to children, parents and members of staff.

Allegations of Previous Abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some period of time after the event. For example, by an adult who was abused as a child by a member of staff who is still currently working with children. Where such an allegation is made, the organisation should follow the procedures given and report the matter to the social services department or the police. This is because other children, either within the sport or outside it, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse or a schedule 1 offence is automatically excluded from working with children.

Prevention

All children have a right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect.

Basic guidelines will help safeguard children, staff, volunteers within the organisation concerned and reduce the risk of allegations being made. These are listed below.

Recruitment, Selecting Staff and Volunteers

Anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and vulnerable adults. It is essential the same procedure is used consistently whether staff are paid or unpaid in part-time or full-time occupation.

When undertaking pre-selection checks the following should be included:

- All volunteers and staff working for a swim school, organisation or club should complete an application form
- Application forms should be designed to elicit information about an applicant's past career (including any gaps), and to establish any criminal record
- Consent should be obtained from applicants for police and social services checks
- At least two references should be provided, including at least one regarding previous work with children
- Clubs and employers should have effective measures in place to ensure the confidentiality of information received in relation to applicants is treated with the strictest of confidence
- All volunteers and employees should sign a Child Protection Protocol
- All volunteers and employees should be checked with the following organisations who maintain information about individuals who are deemed unsuitable to work with children:

England and Wales:	DBS	0870 9090811
Scotland:	Disclosure Scotland	0870 6096006
Northern Ireland:	Access Northern Ireland	02890 650222

Policy and Procedure

To help prevent abuse of children, the swim school, organisation or club should have a policy which ensures children are protected and kept safe from harm. Everyone involved in the care of children should know what to do if there are concerns about abuse and where procedures are kept.

Training and Seminars

It should be recognised that checks are only part of the process to protect children from possible abuse by members of staff. STA teachers are required to have completed a Safeguarding Children course, with STA's course or an acceptable alternative as determined by STA. They should receive appropriate ongoing training and attend suitable seminars undertaken by experienced deliverers so they are aware and sensitive to potentially abusive situations.

STA recommend swimming teachers update their safeguarding course every three - five years.

Complaints and Appeals

The Management Committee of swim schools, organisations and clubs will ensure there is a well established complaints procedure in operation which all parents, guardians and children have easy accessibility to.

Good Practice in the Care of Children

You can reduce situations where the abuse of children may occur and help to protect staff and volunteers by promoting good practice. The following are more specific examples of care, which should be taken when working within a swimming context.

- Always be publicly open when working with children. Avoid situations where a teacher and individual swimmers are completely unobserved
- Where any form of manual support is required, this should be provided openly with the assent of the child and consent of the parent or guardian. The teacher should also be extremely careful as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. The views of parents / guardians should always be carefully considered
- Where possible parents / guardians should take on the responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. Where classes have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure that teachers work in pairs
- Encourage an open environment, e.g. no secrets
- Do not take children alone in a car on journeys, however short.

And you should never:

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

It may be sometimes necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or have additional needs. These tasks should only be carried out with a full understanding and written consent of parents and of the children involved. There is a need to be responsive to a child's reactions and if a child 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 to carry out particular activities.

If during your care of a child you accidentally hurt them, the child 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 brief written note of it. Parents or guardians should be informed of the incident.

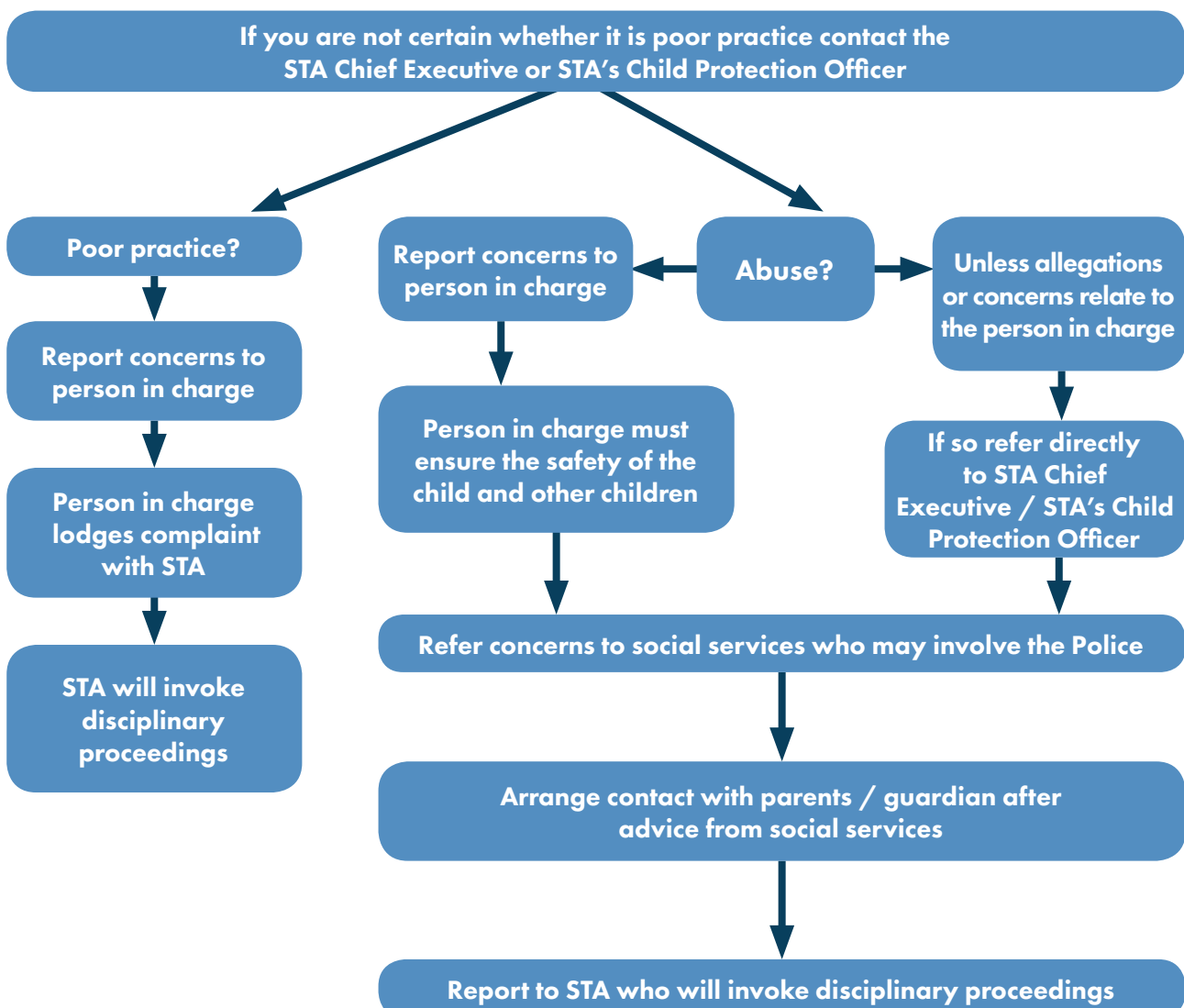
STA acknowledge the help provided by NSPCC in producing these procedures.



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



Teaching in the Water Policy



Introduction

It is preferable for the swimming teacher to conduct swimming lessons from the poolside; there are a number of reasons for this, including:

1. Safety - the swimming teacher is able to maintain full visual cover of all their learners from the poolside and thus be in a position to react quickly to any incidents that may arise
2. Observation - the swimming teacher on the poolside is in a better position to analyse the learner's skills
3. Teacher protection - due to their proximity to the learners and the difficulty of seeing exactly where teachers have their hands; swimming teachers can be more vulnerable to accusations of abuse if they are teaching in the water.

Nevertheless STA recognise that teaching in the water can be very effective and beneficial to many learners. If teachers are delivering lessons in the water then STA strongly recommend that a responsible person (swim school owner, centre / pool manager etc.) has suitable and sufficient risk assessments undertaken to determine the maximum number of learners that a single teacher can teach for each specific type of lesson (e.g. beginners, improvers, pre-school learners, adults etc...) while they are in the water.

STA recommend a maximum ratio of 6 learners to 1 swimming teacher. This recommendation must coincide with a risk assessment where the pool size, depth, shape and learner's age, ability and needs are taken into consideration as the ratio may need to be reduced to ensure safety and effective teaching.

STA recommend a maximum ratio of 12 adult and child pairs to 1 baby and pre-school teacher. This recommendation must coincide with a risk assessment where the pool size, depth, shape and learner's age, ability and needs are taken into consideration as the ratio may need to be reduced to ensure safety and effective teaching.

It is an STA requirement that:

1. When swimming lessons are in progress, there must always be at least one person on duty on the poolside who is competent to respond. This can be the teacher provided they possess appropriate lifesaving competencies, which include rescue skills, CPR, and relevant aspects of the PSOP; this can be achieved by holding a current STA Lifesaving or Lifeguard qualification. A swimming teacher in the water has an extremely limited view of the water and the learners. They should only teach in the water where there is suitable and sufficient cover on the poolside to watch the class as determined by the individual pools risk assessment.
2. STA swimming teachers must have an approved and in-date pool rescue award.

To help with the risk assessment STA recommend that the following points are taken into consideration:

- What is the age of the learners? Will they be able to understand safety instructions given to them by the teacher?
- Do any of the learners have special needs / requirements and / or medical conditions e.g. hearing difficulties, visual impairments, learning difficulties, hidden conditions, physical disabilities etc.?
 - Additional support and supervision may be required depending on the individual needs of the learner
- Are there any site specific characteristics of the pool that may present special risks? E.g. sudden changes in depth, blind spots, specular reflection etc
 - These may require more than one person qualified in pool rescue to be on duty on the poolside
- How deep is the water?
 - Non-swimmers and younger learners will be safer in water of their own standing depth
- What is the size and shape of the pool?
 - Small pools with fewer lessons are easier to supervise

- How many lessons are taking place?
 - More lessons may require more than one pool rescuer on the poolside, due to higher risks with the increased numbers of learners to supervise, increased noise levels etc
- How many poolside rescuers will there be?
 - Will one rescuer be overseeing one class or several? Supervising one class will give a greater degree of safety
- What is the temperature of the water?
 - The warmer it is, the quicker the teacher will become de-hydrated
 - The colder it is, then the teacher may need to be provided with some form of thermal protection (Personal Protective Equipment) i.e. wet suit
 - Swimming teachers may need to wear sun protection when teaching in an outdoor environment
- How long will the teacher remain in the water?
 - STA recommend that all aquatic teachers should not teach in the water for longer than three consecutive hours before having at least a thirty minute break before teaching again. This is to allow themselves time to recover from the water temperature and pool humidity, to hydrate and refresh themselves and to allow their vocal cords to rest. It is also recommended that a teacher does not teach more than two three-hour blocks per day in the water
- Is there a regular change of pool rescue cover?
 - This is to prevent the poolside rescuer from becoming fatigued and allowing them to remain vigilant and alert.

STA recommend that the following guidelines are also observed:

- The maximum depth of water where a teacher can operate safely is when the water is approximately at mid-chest level
 - Note: The swimming teacher in the water must be able to stand, walk freely and not be forced by the depth of water, into a floating position
- The teaching positions will be different when teaching in the water, the teacher must always position themselves so they have the whole class under observation
 - Note: Particular attention must be paid when the swimming teacher is attending to an individual learner, the teacher must be aware of the safety of the rest of the class and this may necessitate the remainder of the class being on poolside
- The parent / guardian should be informed that the swimming teacher will be in the water and advise them of the reasons and benefits to the learner
- The parent / guardian should be informed of the methods of manual support, if any, that will be used and their consent obtained for methods employed
- The swimming teacher should only use methods of manual support that are appropriate to the age and ability of the learner
- Prior to using manual support the teacher should inform the learner, explain the procedure and seek the learner's permission
- Manual support should only be given when necessary and only for as long as it is required
- The swimming teacher should keep his / her hands in view whenever possible
- The swimming teacher should be easily recognisable as the instructor by, for example, wearing a 'Teacher' T-shirt
- The swimming teacher should not infringe on the personal space of adult / child learners and should be aware of familiarity that may come from learners.





Ault Insurance



STA has asked Ault providers of Swimsure Swimming Club insurance, to produce a simple flow chart to assist members and to provide a brief summary of the different types of insurance cover that may be required.

Below are the main policy covers to consider although the list is not exhaustive, the numbered notes on the flow chart refers to the numbered paragraphs below. If you are still unclear as to the type of cover you need to protect yourself and your business, the team at Swimsure would be happy to answer any questions that you may have. You can contact that at www.swimsure.co.uk or call on 0845 450 8020

Summary of Insurance Covers

1. **Standard Members Insurance - IMPORTANT - the cover only applies when you are acting within your qualification and acting as an employee, or on your own account and in your own name:**

- a. Public and Products Liability as per 2a and 2b below; limit of £10 million.
- b. Professional Indemnity as per 6a and 6b below; limit of £1 million.

2. **Public and Products Liability cover which extend to include the following as standard:**

- a. Claims made by one member against another member.
- b. Claims made against you for bodily injury or damage to third-party property.
- c. Claims against your directors, partners or trustees while acting in a personal capacity outside of the United Kingdom claims against you for liability arising from your breach of the 1998 Data Protection Act.

3. **Employer's Liability cover which extends to include the following as standard:**

- a. Claims against you for your legal liability for bodily injury to your employees.

4. **Property cover which extends to include the following as standard:**

- a. Cover for damage to, or loss of business equipment and stock anywhere in the geographical limits. Also cover for buildings, pool and pool plant equipment can be included.

5. **Business Interruption which covers the following as standard:**

- a. Your loss of income as a result of you not being able to use your normal swimming pool following damage or breakdown of pool plant.

6. **Professional Indemnity which extends to include the following as standard:**

- a. Claims made against you for negligence, breach of duty or care, breach of confidence or misuse of any information by you.
- b. Claims made against you for defamation or a infringement of intellectual property rights.

You may also wish to consider having cover for the following risks:

7. Commercial Legal Protection which extends to include the following as standard:

- a. Your legal defence costs, employment disputes and awards, property protection and bodily injury and tax protection.

8. Management and Trustee Liability cover which extends to include the following as standard:

- a. Any wrongful act, error or omission committed by a trustee, committee member, volunteer, director or officer including breach of duty, breach of trust, negligence and defamation.

9. Personal Accident covers the following as standard:

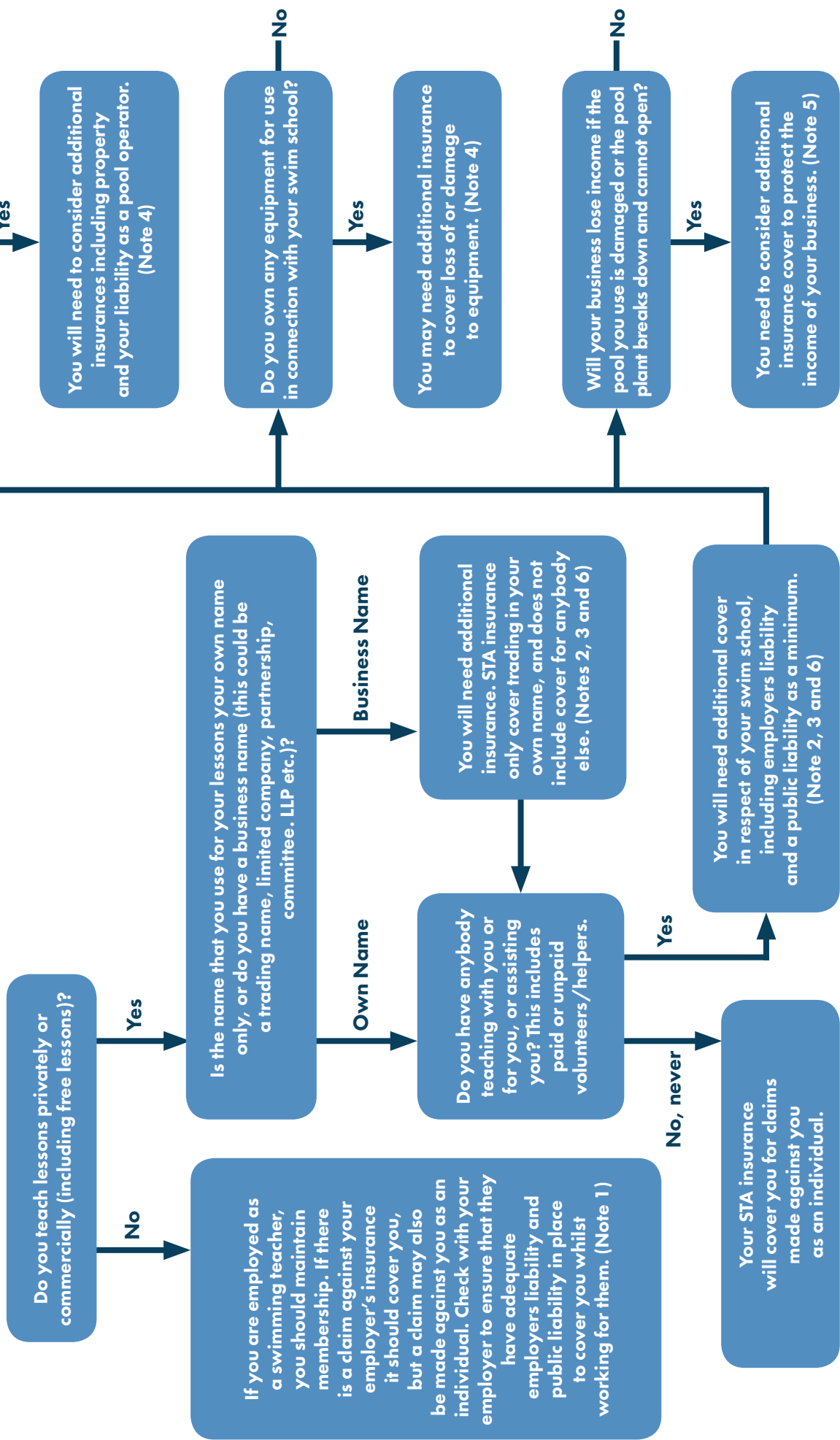
- a. Capital benefit following death, loss of limb, loss of sight, loss of hearing or loss of speech or permanent total disablement.

If the flow chart indicates that you need additional cover you should contact Ault at www.swimsure.co.uk or call 0845 450 8020. The Swimsure Swimming Club standard policy covers risks detailed under notes 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8 above with the option to extend the cover to additional risks, or to insure higher values, if this is deemed necessary. It is fully flexible and will be adjusted to meet your specific needs.

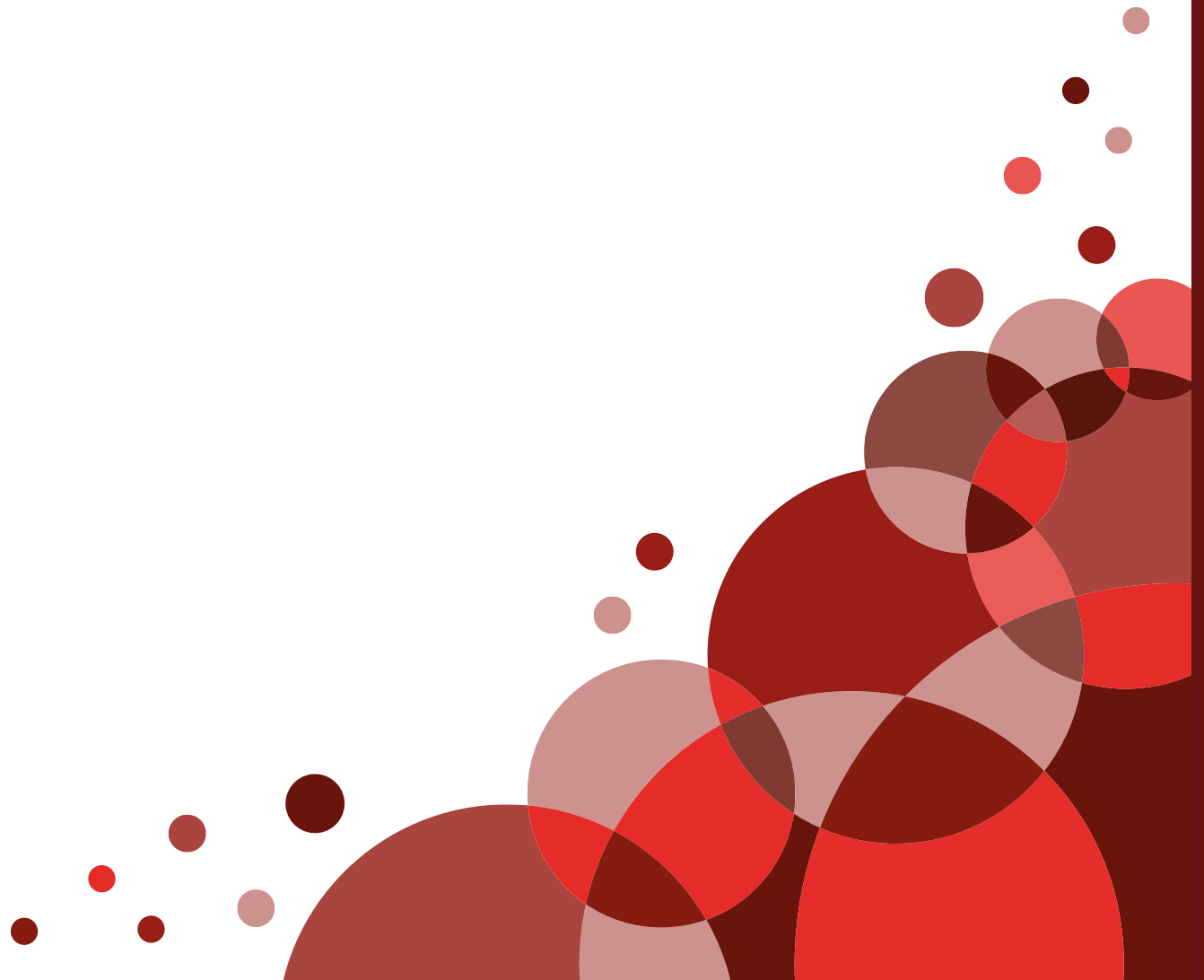
Please note that this brief summary gives only an indication of the types of insurance cover that you may need in the circumstances outlined. STA cannot offer insurance advice; this will be provided by Ault who, before advising you, will need to be given information by you on the size and structure of your operation.



This information is provided by Ault Insurance Brokers and SwimSure Swimming Club Insurance



Generic Teaching Information



Terms and Definitions

Non Swimmer Learner

Those who are not able to swim, may be of any age. Non swimmers may have no confidence in the water and may be fearful in a swimming pool environment.

Beginner Learner

Those who are mobile in the water but who would not be safe out of their depth without buoyancy aids.

Improver Learner

Those who are able to swim 15 metres on their front and their back.

Advanced Learner

Those who can sustain a good stroke over 100 metres.

Baby

A child between 0 - 1 years old.

Toddler

A child between 1 - 2 years old.

Pre-Schooler

A child between 2 - 4 years.

Assistant

A helper who works under the supervision of a swimming teacher. They may or may not hold a qualification.

Competency

An individual who is qualified or has sufficient skills, knowledge and experience in order to undertake a specific role or task.

Risk Assessment

A systematic process of evaluating the potential risks posed to a swimming teacher, learner or parent / guardian within the lesson. The person completing the risk assessment must be a competent person who understands how to correctly complete a risk assessment.

Pool Safety Operating Procedure (PSOP)

A document specific to every pool. The PSOP contains the Normal Operating Plan and the Emergency Action Plan.

Normal Operating Plan (NOP)

Documented plan for daily operation of a swimming pool.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

A document which gives specific instructions on the action to be taken by all staff in the event of an emergency.

Lifesaving Qualification

A recognised qualification which includes rescue skills, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) skills, basic first aid skills and knowledge of relevant aspects of the PSOP.

Swimming Teacher

The term swimming teacher has been used during the generic teaching section, this term includes baby and pre-school teachers, disability teachers and swimming teachers.

Swimming Teacher Qualifications

STA Award in Aquatic Teaching - Baby and Pre-School (STA BPS)

The Baby and Pre-School qualification aims to produce teachers that can teach aquatic activities, including paddle strokes to babies and pre-school children during adult and children lessons.

STA Award in Swimming Teaching (STA A)

The Award in Swimming Teaching aims to produce teachers that can teach up to 10 beginners and deliver the STANley Series of awards, as well as the Octopus and Goldfish Series of STA's International Learn to Swim Programme.

STA Certificate in Swimming Teaching (STA C)

The Certificate in Swimming Teaching aims to prepare holders to teach, without supervision, learners of all levels.

STA Award in Aquatic Teaching - People with Disabilities (STA PDS)

The People with Disabilities qualification aims to train teachers to teach aquatic activities to individuals and groups with most types of disabilities.

Lifesaving Qualifications

STA Safety Award for Teacher (STA SAT)

Holders of the Safety Award for Teachers are capable in pool rescue, first aid, adult, child and infant CPR techniques. Holders will be competent to deal with poolside emergencies in accordance with the HSE publication *Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools and British Standard BS EN 15288 Part 2, Safety Requirements for Operations*.

STA Pool Responder (STA PR)

The Pool Responder qualification is designed to train candidates in pool rescue, CPR techniques and first aid competencies in order to deal with poolside emergencies in accordance with the National Occupational Standards and the HSE publication *Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools and British Standard BS EN 15288 Part 2, Safety Requirements for Operations*.

STA Pool Lifeguard (STA PL)

The Pool Lifeguard qualification is designed to train lifeguards in pool rescue, CPR techniques, first aid and dealing with poolside emergencies in accordance with the National Occupational Standards and sections 140 – 185 of *Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools and British Standard BS EN 15288 Part 2, Safety Requirements for Operations*.

Qualification Overview

The table below shows the qualifications needed in order to teach each level / ability of learner.

	STA Award - Baby and Pre-school	STA Award in Swimming Teaching	STA Certificate in Swimming Teaching	STA Award - People with Disabilities
Babies/ toddlers in an adult and child lesson	✓			
Pre-schoolers in an adult and child lesson	✓			
Pre-schoolers without an adult in the water (but with a swimming teacher)		✓	✓	
Non Swimmers including adult and child learners		✓	✓	
Beginners including adult and child learners		✓	✓	
Improvers including adult and child learners			✓	
Advanced learners including adult and child learners			✓	
Survival Skills			✓	
Rescue Skills			✓	
Diving			✓	
Competitive Starts and Turns			✓	
Specialist Disability Lessons				✓

STA Award Scheme Overview

The table below shows the STA International Learn to Swim Programme teachers are qualified to assess.

	STA BPS	STA A	STA C	STA PDS
STARFISH Series	✓			
STANley Series	✓	✓	✓	
Octopus Series		✓	✓	
Goldfish Series		✓	✓	
Angelfish Series			✓	
Shark Series			✓	
Advanced Swimmers Series			✓	
Platinum Series			✓	
Distance Series	✓ (up to 10m)	✓	✓	
Kingfisher Series			✓	
Dolphin Series			✓	
Water Safety Series			✓	
Competitive Starts and Turns Series			✓	
Junior Lifeguard Academy			✓	
Rockhopper Series				✓
Emperor Penguin Series				✓

Best Practice Teaching Recommendations

Lifesaving

STA teachers should hold a suitable lifesaving qualification when a designated lifesaver is not present. The STA Safety Award for Teachers qualification is a suitable lifesaving award which contains pool procedures, pool rescue techniques, CPR for adult, child and infant as well as aquatic first aid.

When teaching in the water, there must always be at least one person on the poolside who is competent to respond:

- A swimming teacher who is teaching on the poolside alongside the teacher in the water may be this competent person as long as they are qualified
- The swimming teacher in the water may be the trained person however there must be someone on the poolside who can respond and initiate the Emergency Action Plan. A risk assessment should also be conducted to determine who rescues the swimming teacher if something happens to them.

Note: Trained means, providing he / she possesses appropriate lifesaving competencies – these can include rescue skills, CPR, and relevant aspects of the PSOP. This can be achieved by holding a current lifesaving or lifeguard qualification.

Baby and pre-school teachers must ensure there is appropriate safety cover available. This can be the baby and pre-school teacher whilst they are teaching in the water, as every learner has an accompanying adult with them. However, teachers must ensure there is an emergency plan in place to gain further assistance quickly.

If a swimming teacher does not hold a lifesaving qualification, a qualified lifesaver must be present on poolside at all times.

First Aid

There must be someone within the facility who is qualified to deal with a first aid situation. This can be the swimming teacher providing there is an action plan of who takes control of the learners within the teacher's lesson.

Safeguarding

All swimming teachers should undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check (England and Wales) Disclosure Scotland check (Scotland) or Access Northern Ireland Check (NI).

STA teachers are required to have completed a Safeguarding Children course. They should receive appropriate ongoing training and attend suitable seminars undertaken by experienced deliverers, every three to five years, so they are aware and sensitive to potentially abusive situations.

Swim Schools should have a clear safeguarding policy with detailed policies for reporting and recording safeguarding concerns. When a swimming teacher works for a company, they should understand the company's procedures and policy.

If a swimming teacher has any concerns over the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult they can contact the STA Child Protection Officer for further advice and support.

Please take note that if you are applying for an enhanced DBS check, you need to familiarise yourself with the process before making an application.

Teaching Ratios

A risk assessment may be required to calculate how many learners a single swimming teacher can safely teach during a lesson; pool space, number of teachers and assistants, age and ability of the learners should also be taken into consideration when conducting the risk assessment. The table below states the maximum recommended teaching ratios, a ratio may need to be reduced depending on the risk assessment and to ensure a high quality swimming lesson.

Type of Learner	Learner to Swimming Teacher Ratio
Baby and Pre-School	12 : 1 adult and child pairs
Learners aged 3 – 4 years (with a swimming teacher delivering the lesson and their accompanying adult on the poolside)	6 : 1 for a STA Award Teacher and STA Certificate Teacher
Non swimmers and beginners when the swimming teacher is in the water	6 : 1 with appropriate safely cover on the poolside
Non swimmers and beginners	10 : 1 for a STA Award Teacher 12 : 1 for a STA Certificate Teacher
Improvers	20 : 1 for a STA Certificate Teacher
Advanced	20 : 1 for a STA Certificate Teacher
People with disabilities	1 : 1 or 1 : 4 depending on learners needs

Pool Temperatures

The following recommendations are taken from 'The Pool Water Treatment Advisory Group'. They are maximum values and are not intended as set targets.

Children's teaching pool	29 - 31 °C 84 - 87 °F
Babies under 3 months or 5.5kg/ 12lbs	32 °C 89 °F
Babies (over 3 months), young learners and people with a disability	30 - 32 °C 86 - 89 °F
Hydrotherapy pool	30 - 35 °C 86 - 95 °F
Recreational swimming	27 - 29 °C 80 - 84 °F
Competitive swimming and diving, fitness swimming	26 - 28 °C 78 - 82 °F

Pool Water Management

The pool water management is the responsibility of the pool manager / owner. Unless in the hire agreement it states that the pool water management is the responsibility of the occupant whilst the pool is under hire. Swimming teachers must ensure when hiring a facility that this aspect is clear within the agreement.

Continual Professional Development (CPD)

In order to maintain occupational competency, STA strongly recommends all swimming teachers gain at least 1 CPD point per year.

CPD points are achieved through seminars, face to face or online and practical teaching hours.

Swimming teachers should gain at least 1 CPD point from one aspect each year and another CPD point from another aspect the following year. For example year 1, 1 CPD point gained from practical teaching hours, year 2, 1 CPD point gained from seminars.

- 50 practical teaching hours = 1 CPD point
- Seminar 0 – 4 hours = ½ CPD point
- Seminar over 4 hours = 1 CPD point.

Note: CPD Seminars must be relevant to a swimming teacher's qualification e.g. a diving CPD seminar is not relevant to a Baby and Pre-School teacher or STA Award teacher.

All swimming teachers should ensure they regularly update themselves with best practice teaching methods and the laws of the sport.

Pool Safety Operating Procedures

Swimming teachers must ensure they have read, understood and follow the Normal Operating Plan and Emergency Action Plan for every pool facility they teach in.

Lone Worker

A swimming teacher should not operate / teach in a lone worker environment.

If a swimming teacher is taken ill and needs emergency assistance, there needs to be someone available to respond, initiate the Emergency Action Plan and take control of the other learners within a lesson.

In order to protect themselves from safeguarding concerns, swimming teachers should not be alone with a learner or learners.

A detailed and thorough risk assessment should be undertaken to ensure the safety of all.

Equipment

All equipment used must be safe, clean and hygienic.

All equipment should be checked before the start of a swimming lesson by the swimming teacher. Where equipment is damaged or unfit for use, the centre or swim school manager should be informed and appropriate action should be taken according to the facility risk assessment.

During a swimming lesson all equipment must be kept neat and tidied.

Ensure the storage area is cleaned and all equipment is washed in clean water after use and allowed to dry before storing away neatly to reduce the growth of bacteria.

Equipment should be age appropriate for the learner. Babies should not be given small toys which could be a choking hazard.

Equipment should be adjusted for correct fit and checked to ensure that they are safe prior to use. The following European Standards apply to swimming aids or equipment:

- Buoyant aids for swimming instruction – Part 1: Safety requirements and test methods for buoyant aids to be worn EN 13138-1:2010.
- Buoyant aids for swimming instruction – Part 2: Safety requirements and test methods for buoyant aids to be held EN 13138-2:2010.
- Buoyant aids for swimming instructions – Part 3: Safety requirements and test methods for swim seats EN13138-3:2010.

Teaching in the Water Best Practice Methods

STA policy summary:

- A swimming teacher should undertake a risk assessment, look at the class ability, number of learners and situation to decide if they really need to teach in the water
- A swimming teacher should not teach improver or advanced learners from within the water
- When teaching in the water there must be someone on the poolside who is competent to respond
- STA recommend a maximum teaching ratio 6 learners : 1 swimming teacher
- It is strongly recommended swimming teachers have written consent from parents / guardians and they are informed of the methods of manual support that will be used during lessons
- No swimming teacher should teach in the water for more than three consecutive hours
- STA recommends that if there is only an open-plan facility, the teacher should wait until all learners and parents/ guardians have left the changing rooms first. It is not appropriate for the swimming teacher to undress alongside their learners.

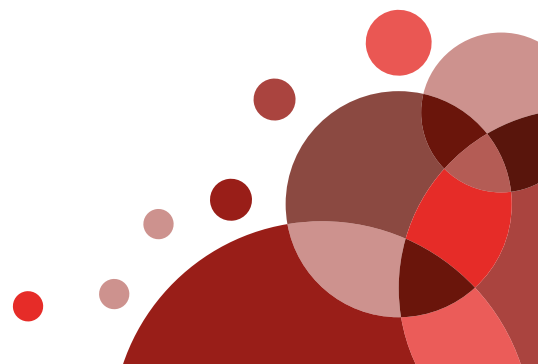
Manual Support

- It is important that learners are not forced to undertake an activity. A swimming teacher is there to provide encouragement and reassurance, NOT to force or pull a learner into an activity they are nervous to try
- Swimming teachers should try to keep hands in sight and above the water surface when possible and it is of paramount importance for a witness or observer to be present on poolside whenever in-pool teaching takes place
- Neither swimming teachers nor assistant swimming teachers should be left on their own with a learner or group of learners
- Whenever possible, swimming teachers should support learners by holding teaching aids, supporting under the head or holding learners' hands. Learners should not be supported under the tummy or under the bottom and they should not be pulled by the arms. A teacher should get permission from a learner prior to supporting, and the learner should be informed where and how support will be given. Learners must never be grabbed.

Please note: In the event of an emergency rescue, it may be necessary to retrieve a learner quickly, without gaining permission.

Teaching Positions in the Water

- The maximum depth of water in which a teacher can operate safely is when the water is approximately at the mid-chest line. If the swimming teacher is in the water, he / she must be able to stand and walk freely – and not be forced by the depth of water – into a floating position
- The swimming teacher must also ensure assistants or accompanying adults within their lessons are able to stand and are working at a comfortable chest line depth
- Lesson areas may need to be roped off in order to maintain safety
- When teaching in the water, the swimming teacher must maintain visibility of the whole class at all times
- Swimming teachers should remain standing up when teaching in the water because they are easier to see. It also creates an open teaching position where their hands can be seen.



Recommended Manual Support Positions

Supporting the learner by the hands



Supporting the learner holding the woggle



Supporting the learner holding the head



Supporting the learner under the floats



Professional Conduct

A swimming teacher is a role model for the learners and the way they conduct themselves reflects not only on themselves as an individual, but also on the swim school or organisation they are employed by. Therefore swimming teachers are expected to behave professionally at all times and follow best practice guidelines.

Appropriate Attire

STA teachers should wear appropriate clothing so they are easy to identify and look professional:

- A smart t-shirt or uniform top, shorts and appropriate footwear
- Makeup should not be worn
- Long hair should be tied up
- All jewellery must be removed to protect the learners and teacher
- Facial jewellery should not be worn
- Tattoos should be covered.

When teaching from within the water.

- A swimming costume or swimming shorts. A bikini is not appropriate
- A wetsuit style top and shorts is preferred over swim wear or a suitable polo or t-shirt. The t-shirt should not have any inappropriate pictures or words on, it should be a plain t-shirt or a uniform top may be provided by the swim school.

Appropriate Language

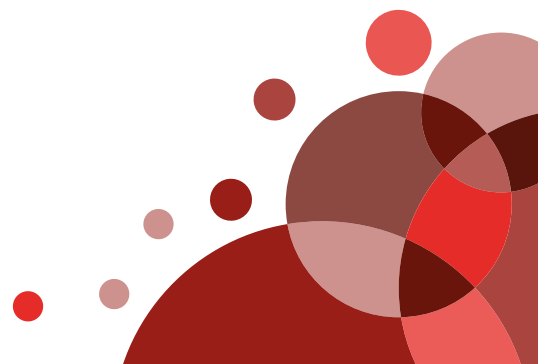
Swimming teachers should use appropriate language for the age group and reinforce the relevant teaching points.

Discussions regarding personal relationships, members of staff or learners and learners parents and guardians is forbidden.

The use of swear words, bad language, inappropriate comments or discussions regarding personal activities is unacceptable. These comments, discussions and language should not be used on poolside, in the changing room, or around the pool area, as parents, guardians or learners may still be able to hear.

Appropriate Behaviour

A swimming teacher should respect the rules of the pool and swim school at all times. They should behave in a professional manner when in the pool area, changing rooms and facilities to set learners a good example of behaviour.





STA Award in Aquatic Teaching - Baby and Pre-School



Qualification

Teachers must hold the STA Level 2 Award in Aquatic Teaching - Baby and Pre-School in order to deliver aquatic activities including paddle strokes to baby and pre-school learners in adult and child lessons.

If teachers want to teach pre-school learners with the accompanying adult on the poolside, not in the water, they need to hold the STA Level 2 Award or certificate in Swimming Teaching.

Award Scheme

Holders of the STA Level 2 Award in Aquatic Teaching - Baby and Pre-School can teach and assess:

- The STARFISH Series
- The STAnley Series
- 5 metre and 10 metre distance awards.

Maximum Teaching Ratio

Type of Learner	Learner to Swimming Teacher Ratio
Baby and pre-school	12 : 1 adult and child pairs

A risk assessment will need to be completed to calculate how many pairs a swimming teacher can safely teach, pool space, depth and age of learners must be considered and the ratio reduced if required.

Lifesaving Cover

Baby and pre-school teachers must ensure there is appropriate safety cover available. This can be the baby and pre-school teacher whilst they are teaching in the water as every learner has an accompanying adult with them. However teachers must ensure there is an emergency plan in place to gain further assistance quickly.

If the teacher does not hold a lifesaving qualification there must be a lifesaver on the poolside.

If there is not a designated lifesaver on poolside a detailed and comprehensive risk assessment must be completed to ensure the safety of the teacher, adults and learners.

First Aid

Baby and pre-school teachers must ensure there is someone qualified to deal with a first aid incident within the pool facility.

Pool Temperatures

Children's teaching pool	29 - 31 °C 84 - 87 °F
Babies under 3 months or 5.5kg / 12lbs	32 °C 89 °F
Babies (over 3 months), young learners and people with a disability	30 - 32 °C 86 - 89 °F
Hydrotherapy pool	30 - 35 °C 86 - 95 °F

Baby Swim Wear

STA recommends the use of a purpose made swimming costume with a waterproof disposable or reusable nappy for swimming pool use.

A swim nappy will not absorb water, does not restrict movement and is manufactured specifically for this purpose. However it must be noted that no swim nappy or double nappy method has been scientifically proven to prevent the release of all oocysts in water. If a loose runny stool is detected then the child should be removed from the pool together with all other occupants and the EAP must be strictly applied.

Baby and pre-school teachers should ensure that adults are aware of site specific pool policy regarding the disposal of swimming nappies, ordinary nappies and disposable swimwear.

Continual Professional Development

In order to maintain occupational competency, STA strongly recommends all swimming teachers gain at least 1 CPD point per year.

CPD points are achieved through seminars, face to face or online and practical teaching hours.

Swimming teachers should gain at least 1 CPD point from one aspect each year and another CPD point from another aspect the following year. For example year 1, 1 CPD point gained from practical teaching hours, year 2, 1 CPD point gained from seminars.

- 50 practical teaching hours = 1 CPD point
- Seminar 0 – 4 hours = ½ CPD point
- Seminar over 4 hours = 1 CPD point.

Note: CPD Seminars must be relevant to a swimming teacher's qualification e.g. a diving CPD seminar is not relevant to a Baby and Pre-School teacher or STA Award teacher.

All swimming teachers should ensure they regularly update themselves with best practice teaching methods.

Equipment

Baby and pre-school teachers must ensure all equipment is safe and hygienically clean before the start of a lesson.

All equipment should be checked before the start of a swimming lesson by the swimming teacher. Where equipment is damaged or unfit for use, the centre or swim school manager should be informed and appropriate action should be taken according to the facility risk assessment.

During a swimming lesson all equipment must be kept neat and tidied.

Ensure the storage area is cleaned and all equipment is washed in clean water after use and allowed to dry before storing away neatly to reduce the growth of bacteria.

Baby and pre-school learners will put toys and objects in their mouths therefore teachers must ensure all equipment is large enough and will not be a choking hazard.

STA Baby Swimming Policy

To ensure babies and pre-school children are introduced to the aquatic environment in a safe and positive manner, STA in partnership with Birthlight have updated the baby swimming policy. The policy offers guidance and best practice guidelines on the following areas:

1. Starting Baby Swimming
2. The Pool Environment
3. Teaching Methodology
4. Submersions.

1. Starting Baby Swimming

The policy of STA, with regards to introducing babies to aquatic activities is as follows:

- Babies should only be introduced to water in line with the most recent recommendations from the Department of Health. The current recommendation, at the date of publication, is "Your baby does not need any immunisations before they go swimming" and "You can take your baby swimming at any time before and after their immunisations" <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/parents-questions-about-childhood-vaccinations.aspx>
- A teacher should ensure that a midwife, a health visitor or a doctor is happy for the baby and new mother to be introduced to a public swimming pool. A signed statement by a parent / guardian provides some assurance that it is appropriate to introduce the child to the aquatic environment
- Teachers need to be aware, the immune system of babies born prematurely does not develop at the same pace as that of full term babies
- Babies aged 0-3 months are highly sensitive to sensory stimulation. Their introduction to public pools at this time requires special skills from a baby and pre-school swimming teacher, to lower the risk of age-inappropriate stimulation that can be damaging in the short or long term.

2. Pool Environment

With no set earliest date for introducing babies to a pool, the quality of the water and the pool environment are critical for the health and safety of very young babies (0 to 3 months):

- The water and air temperature must be higher than for normal public swimming; at least 30°C (32°C for babies under 3 months old or weighing less than 5.5 kilos / 12lbs)
- Babies and toddlers who are not toilet trained, should wear specialised waterproof nappies to prevent leakage as much as possible. Parents should be made aware of site specific pool policies
- Baby swimming during the first six months should not take place in sea-water pools (see explanatory note)
- Teachers should ensure the water quality and clarity is within the recommended guidelines and the pool is well managed and maintained
- Teachers are expected to be familiar with the NOP and EAP for every pool they deliver lessons at.

3. Teaching Methodology

The introduction of babies and pre-schoolers to water must be very careful and gentle in order to prevent long-term fear of water being developed

- The teaching of babies and pre-school children should only be undertaken by holders of a suitable specialist baby and pre-school teaching certificate such as the STA Award in Aquatic Teaching – Baby and Pre-School
- Teachers should maintain occupational competency by completing a minimum of 1 CPD point per year
- Teachers should hold a recognised lifesaving qualification which includes paediatric resuscitation such as the STA Safety Award for Teachers
- Teachers must ensure they are working within the guidelines set out in the STA Code of Practice which includes safeguarding, code of ethics and professional conduct
- The maximum teaching ratio is 12 adult – child pairs to 1 baby and pre-school teacher. A risk assessment may be required to calculate how many pairs one teacher can safely teach during a lesson. Pool space, age and abilities of the pairs should also be taken into consideration as numbers may need to be reduced in order to deliver safe effective lessons.

4. Submersion Policy

Submersion is likely to occur as part of aquatic activities when adults with babies and pre-schoolers move together in the water. When submersions are carefully introduced by specially trained teachers, they can be beneficial towards creating the best foundations for swimming, as well as helping develop water confidence and water safety skills.

Submersion is only one part of introducing babies and pre-schoolers to the aquatic environment. It should never be the dominant focus as it can be counterproductive to both the aims and objectives of adults and babies enjoying being in water together. An excessive number of submersions can be averse to setting good foundations in swimming.

The policy of STA relates to intentional submersion as a practice that takes place as part of the communication between baby, accompanying adult and the teacher in a structured session.

Submersion is not something done to a baby but with a baby. Any submersion practice that does not take into account the readiness of the baby as demonstrated by 'baby cues', irrespective of the consent of the accompanying adult, amounts to a forced submersion and is contrary to best practice.

This policy does not include accidental submersions which may happen during a session; these submersions should be avoided as much as possible. Teachers should make sure adults are informed of correct holds and observe all adult and baby pairs carefully.

STA places the willingness and acceptance of the baby or pre-schooler at the forefront of its submersion policy. Submersion practices which are carried out on a baby or pre-schooler without their obvious willingness is likened to enforced behaviour and is not ethically acceptable. More over these practices can compromise healthy brain development of babies.

Forced submersion is contrary to best practice; it must not be carried out.

STA recognises 3 classes of acceptable submersions:

1. Intentional submersions:

Submersions intended as part of a structured session, but only carried out as baby or pre-schooler led, after accompanying adults have been briefed by the teacher in the observation of positive cues.

2. Pre-schooler initiated submersions:

Activities led by the teacher such as jumping in, blowing bubbles, jumping from a raft may lead to submersions initiated by the toddler or pre-schooler.

3. Accidental submersion:

The baby / pre-schooler falls in or is submerged inadvertently due to loss of balance during shared activities with the accompanying adult. Teachers are specially trained to manage accidental submersions to avoid distress being caused to either the baby / pre-schooler or accompanying adult.

Guidelines for Best Practice

- Intentional submersion should only take place when the baby / pre-schooler shows signs that he / she is ready, and only then as part of a fun exercise. If carried out at an inappropriate time, submersion may lead to distress and may result in a baby / pre-schooler experiencing long term fear of water
- Submersion practices should be progressive and should be stopped immediately if the baby / pre-schooler shows any signs of distress or unhappiness
- Submersions should only take place with the active involvement of the baby / pre-schooler; it should not be attempted when the baby / pre-schooler is looking away or is unaware of what is about to happen.



Frequency of Intentional Submersions

The frequency, depth and duration of submersions should be controlled within the guidelines set out below:

- The frequency of intentional submersions should be based on the baby / pre-schoolers age, physical ability and experience. It will also depend upon the swimming teacher's style and technique of teaching
- The number of intentional submersions per session should be built up progressively at the baby / pre-schoolers pace.

As a guideline STA suggests that the following frequencies be used:

- For babies under 6 months old, a maximum of 4 intentional submersions per session; in addition, accidental submersions should be avoided as much as possible. Initially there may only be one or two submersions, building up to more as the baby develops in age, physical ability and experience
- For babies aged 6 to 12 months old, the number of intentional submersions can be built up to a maximum of 6 intentional submersions per session, in addition to initiated submersions when babies start jumping in by themselves
- For toddlers over 12 months old there is no upper limit provided that submersions are child-led and in the context of a happy interaction between accompanying adult and the toddler / pre-schooler.

Depth of Submersion

The depth of submersion is dependent upon age, physical ability and experience of the baby.

STA recommend that:

- No baby under 12 months should be submerged to a depth greater than 1 metre, this a maximum depth. Surface swims with face submerged is recommend for babies with a gradual build up deeper as toddlers develops
- Toddlers / pre-schoolers over 12 months can progressively build up to a maximum submersion depth of 1 metres.

Duration of Submersion

- Babies under 12 months can progressively build up to a submersion time of 3 seconds
- Toddlers / pre-schoolers over 12 months can progressively build up to a submersion time of 10 seconds
- Teachers need to be aware and vigilant as to when a toddler / pre-schoolers need to come up for air.

Explanatory Note

The principal concern surrounding the number of submersions a baby undertakes is related to water intoxication (hyponatremia). The diving reflex stops water entering the lungs of babies under 12 months.

The volume of water absorbed will modify the salt concentration in babies' blood, which may cause 'water intoxication'. There has not been significant or recent research on this subject other than that carried out by Karl G Rosen, MD, PhD, published by the Swedish Paediatric Association in collaboration with the Swedish Board of Health and Welfare together with the Swedish Swimming Association. His research has shown that a baby needs to drink at least 10% of its body weight for the risk of water intoxication to occur. In a study of 15 babies below the age of 6 months, undertaking a 20 minute swimming session consisting of between 5 and 10 submersions, 7 of the babies increased their body weight by a maximum of 1.6%.

Signs and Symptoms of Hyponatremia:

- Nausea and vomiting
- Loss of energy
- Frequent urination
- Unconsciousness.

Seek medical attention as soon as possible.

STA Award in Swimming Teaching



Qualification

Holders of the STA Award in Swimming Teaching can teach up to 10 beginner learners unsupervised. Teachers can teach the skills and elements in the STAnley, Octopus and Goldfish award series.

They may also act as an assistant swimming teacher and can teach larger classes or advanced skills under the direct supervision of a swimming teacher qualified to certificate level.

Award Scheme

Holders of the STA Award in Swimming Teaching can teach and assess:

- The STAnley Series
- The Octopus Series
- The Goldfish Series
- The Adult Series
- The Distance Series.

Maximum Teaching Ratio

The table below states the maximum recommended teaching ratios; a ratio may need to be reduced depending on the risk assessment and to ensure a high quality swimming lesson.

Type of Learner	Learner to Swimming Teacher Ratio
Learners aged 3 – 4 years (with a swimming teacher delivering the lesson and their accompanying adult on the poolside)	6 : 1 for a STA Award Teacher
Non swimmers and beginners when the swimming teacher is in the water	6 : 1 with appropriate safety cover on the poolside
Non swimmers and beginners	10 : 1 for a STA Award Teacher

A risk assessment will need to be completed to calculate how many learners a swimming teacher can safely teach, pool space, depth of pool, number of assistants, age and ability of learners must be considered and the ratio reduced if required.

Lifesaving Cover

Swimming teachers must ensure there is appropriate safety cover available. This can be the swimming teacher when they are teaching from the poolside.

When teaching from within the water, there must be a competent person on the poolside:

- A swimming teacher who is teaching on the poolside alongside the teacher in the water may be this competent person as long as they are trained
- The swimming teacher in the water may be the trained person however there must be someone on the poolside who can respond and initiate the Emergency Action Plan. A risk assessment should also be conducted to determine who rescues the swimming teacher if something happens to them.

Note: Trained means, providing he / she possesses appropriate lifesaving competencies – these can include rescue skills, CPR, and relevant aspects of the PSOP. This can be achieved by holding a current STA Lifesaving or lifeguard qualification.

If the teacher does not hold a lifesaving qualification there must be a lifesaver on the poolside.

First Aid

Swimming teachers must ensure there is someone qualified to deal with a first aid incident within the pool facility.

Pool Temperature

Children's teaching pool	29 - 31 °C 84 - 87 °F
Babies (over 3 months), young learners and people with a disability	30 - 32 °C 86 - 89 °F

Continual Professional Development

In order to maintain occupational competency, STA strongly recommends all swimming teachers gain at least 1 CPD point per year.

CPD points are achieved through seminars, face to face or online and practical teaching hours.

Swimming teachers should gain at least 1 CPD point from one aspect each year and another CPD point from another aspect the following year. For example year 1, 1 CPD point gained from practical teaching hours, year 2, 1 CPD point gained from seminars.

- 50 practical teaching hours = 1 CPD point
- Seminar 0 – 4 hours = ½ CPD point
- Seminar over 4 hours = 1 CPD point.

Note: CPD Seminars must be relevant to a swimming teacher's qualification e.g. a diving CPD seminar is not relevant to a Baby and Pre-School teacher or STA Award teacher.

All swimming teachers should ensure they regularly update themselves with best practice teaching methods and the laws of the sport.

Equipment

Swimming teachers must ensure all equipment is safe and hygienically clean before the start of a lesson.

All equipment should be checked before the start of a swimming lesson by the swimming teacher. Where equipment is damaged or unfit for use, the centre or swim school manager should be informed and appropriate action should be taken according to the facility risk assessment.

During a swimming lesson all equipment must be kept neat and tidied.

Ensure the storage area is cleaned and all equipment is washed in clean water after use and allowed to dry before storing away neatly to reduce the growth of bacteria.

Where buoyancy aids are provided, swimming teachers must ensure they conform to British Standards.





STA Certificate in Swimming Teaching



Qualification

Holders of the STA Certificate in Swimming Teaching can teach all abilities of learners. They can also teach poolside diving, rescue skills, survival skills, competitive starts and turns.

Award Scheme

Holders of the STA Award in Swimming Teaching can teach and assess:

- The STAnley Series
- The Octopus Series
- The Goldfish Series
- The Angelfish Series
- The Shark Series
- The Advanced Swimmer Series
- The Platinum Award
- The Kingfisher Series
- The Dolphin series
- The Water Safety Skills Series
- The Competitive Starts and Turns Series
- The Adult Series
- The Distance Series.

Maximum Teaching Ratio

The table below states the maximum recommended teaching ratios, a ratio may need to be reduced depending on the risk assessment and to ensure a high quality swimming lesson.

Type of Learner	Learner to Swimming Teacher Ratio
Learners aged 3 – 4 years (with a swimming teacher delivering the lesson and their accompanying adult on the poolside)	6 : 1 for a STA Certificate Teacher
Non swimmers and beginners when the swimming teacher is in the water	6 : 1 with appropriate safety cover on the poolside
Non swimmers and beginners	12 : 1 for a STA Certificate Teacher
Improvers	20 : 1 for a STA Certificate Teacher
Advanced	20 : 1 for a STA Certificate Teacher

A risk assessment will need to be completed to calculate how many learners a swimming teacher can safely teach, pool space, depth of pool, number of assistants, age and ability of learners must be considered and the ratio reduced if required.

Lifesaving Cover

Swimming teachers must ensure there is appropriate safety cover available. This can be the swimming teacher when they are teaching from the poolside.

When teaching from within the water, there must be a competent person on the poolside:

- A swimming teacher who is teaching on the poolside alongside the teacher in the water may be this competent person as long as they are trained
- The swimming teacher in the water may be the trained person however there must be someone on the poolside who can respond and initiate the Emergency Action Plan. A risk assessment should also be conducted to determine who rescues the swimming teacher if something happens to them.

Note: Trained means, providing s / he possesses appropriate lifesaving competencies – these can include rescue skills, CPR, and relevant aspects of the PSOP. This can be achieved by holding a current STA Lifesaving or Lifeguard qualification.

If the teacher does not hold a lifesaving qualification there must be a lifesaver on the poolside.

Swimming teachers should not be teaching in the water for improver or advanced learner / lessons.

First Aid

Swimming teachers must ensure there is someone qualified to deal with a first aid incident within the pool facility.

Pool Temperature

Children's teaching pool	29 - 31 °C 84 - 87°F
Babies (over 3 months), young learners and people with a disability	30 - 32 °C 86 - 89°F
Competitive swimming and diving, fitness swimming	26 - 28 °C 78 - 82 °F

Continual Professional Development

In order to maintain occupational competency, STA strongly recommends all swimming teachers gain at least 1 CPD point per year.

CPD points are achieved through seminars, face to face or online and practical teaching hours.

Swimming teachers should gain at least 1 CPD point from one aspect each year and another CPD point from another aspect the following year. For example year 1, 1 CPD point gained from practical teaching hours, year 2, 1 CPD point gained from seminars.

- 50 practical teaching hours = 1 CPD point
- Seminar 0 – 4 hours = ½ CPD point
- Seminar over 4 hours = 1 CPD point.

Note: CPD Seminars must be relevant to a swimming teacher's qualification e.g. a diving CPD seminar is not relevant to a Baby and Pre-School teacher or STA Award teacher.

All swimming teachers should ensure they regularly update themselves with best practice teaching methods and the laws of the sport.

Equipment

Swimming teachers must ensure all equipment is safe and hygienically clean before the start of a lesson.

All equipment should be checked before the start of a swimming lesson by the swimming teacher. Where equipment is damaged or unfit for use, the centre or swim school manager should be informed and appropriate action should be taken according to the facility risk assessment.

During a swimming lesson all equipment must be kept neat and tidied.

Ensure the storage area is cleaned and all equipment is washed in clean water after use and allowed to dry before storing away neatly to reduce the growth of bacteria.

Where buoyancy aids are provided, swimming teachers must ensure they conform to British Standards.

STA Award in Aquatic Teaching - People with Disabilities



Qualification

Teachers must hold the STA Level 2 Award in Aquatic Teaching - People with Disabilities in order to deliver aquatic activities to individuals and groups with most types of disabilities.

Award Scheme

Holders of the STA Level 2 Award in Aquatic Teaching - People with Disabilities can teach and assess:

- The Rockhopper Series
- The Emperor Penguin Series.

Maximum Teaching Ratio

Type of Learner	Learner to Swimming Teacher Ratio
People with Disabilities	1 : 1 or 1 : 4 depending on learners needs

A risk assessment will need to be completed to calculate how many learners a swimming teacher can safely teach, pool space, depth, needs of the learner and their age of learners must be considered, and the ratio reduced if required.

Lifesaving Cover

Disability teachers must ensure there is appropriate safety cover available. This can be the teacher when they are teaching from the poolside.

When teaching from within the water, there must be a competent person on the poolside:

- A swimming teacher who is teaching on the poolside alongside the teacher in the water may be this competent person as long as they are trained
- The swimming teacher in the water may be the trained person however there must be someone on the poolside who can respond and initiate the Emergency Action Plan. A risk assessment should also be conducted to determine who rescues the swimming teacher if something happens to them.

Note: Trained means, providing s / he possesses appropriate lifesaving competencies – these can include rescue skills, CPR, and relevant aspects of the PSOP. This can be achieved by holding a current STA Lifesaving or Lifeguard qualification.

If the teacher does not hold a lifesaving qualification there must be a lifesaver on the poolside.

First Aid

People with disabilities teachers must ensure there is someone qualified to deal with a first aid incident within the pool facility.

Pool Temperature

Children's teaching pool	29 - 31 °C 84 - 87 °F
Babies (over 3 months), young learners and people with a disability	30 - 32 °C 86 - 89 °F
Hydrotherapy Pool	30 - 35 °C 86 - 95 °F

Continual Professional Development

In order to maintain occupational competency, STA strongly recommends all swimming teachers gain at least 1 CPD point per year.

CPD points are achieved through seminars, face to face or online and practical teaching hours.

Swimming teachers should gain at least 1 CPD point from one aspect each year and another CPD point from another aspect the following year. For example year 1, 1 CPD point gained from practical teaching hours, year 2, 1 CPD point gained from seminars.

- 50 practical teaching hours = 1 CPD point
- Seminar 0 – 4 hours = ½ CPD point
- Seminar over 4 hours = 1 CPD point.

Note: CPD Seminars must be relevant to a swimming teacher's qualification e.g. a diving CPD seminar is not relevant to a Baby and Pre-School teacher or STA Award teacher.

All swimming teachers should ensure they regularly update themselves with best practice teaching methods.

Equipment

Disability teachers must ensure all equipment is safe and hygienically clean before the start of a lesson.

All equipment should be checked before the start of a swimming lesson by the swimming teacher. Where equipment is damaged or unfit for use, the centre or swim school manager should be informed and appropriate action should be taken according to the facility risk assessment.

During a swimming lesson all equipment must be kept neat and tidied.

Ensure the storage area is cleaned and all equipment is washed in clean water after use and allowed to dry before storing away neatly to reduce the growth of bacteria.

Learners may put toys and objects in their mouths therefore teachers must ensure all equipment is large enough and will not be a choking hazard.





Safety. Qualified.
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