



Our Commitment

Laurie Lawrence Swim School is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment for all children and young people. We recognise the unique rights, needs and vulnerabilities of children, and are dedicated to safeguarding them from harm, abuse and neglect. Our aim is to embed a child-safe culture across all operations. This Child Safe Policy outlines our approach to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and protection of children and young people at our venues, in accordance with Australian child safeguarding standards.

Definitions

- **Safeguarding:** The prevention of impairment to children's physical and psychological health and wellbeing and providing circumstances for healthy development. ChildSafeguarding.com+1
- **Child protection:** The commitment and actions taken to protect children from abuse and neglect. ChildSafeguarding.com
- **Child/young person:** Any person under the age of 18 years (or as defined by Queensland legislation).
- **Abuse/harm:** Physical, sexual, emotional abuse; neglect; exploitation; or behaviour that causes a child actual or potential harm.
- **Staff:** All persons engaged by the Swim School including employees, contractors, volunteers.
- **Visitors:** All persons present on site including but not limited to participants and spectators.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff (employees, contractors, casuals) of Laurie Lawrence Swim School.
- All volunteers, external contractors and third-party service providers engaged by the Swim School.
- All children and young people (under 18 years) participating in any program or activity run by the Swim School, whether on-site or off-site.
- All parents, guardians, family members and visitors/guests of children participating in programs at Laurie Lawrence Swim School.

Principles

Laurie Lawrence Swim School will apply the following principles in child safeguarding:

- **Children's safety and wellbeing is paramount** – in all decisions and activities.
- **Zero tolerance** for any form of child abuse, neglect or harm.
- **Child-centred approach** – engage children and young people, listen to their voices, respect their rights and experiences and actively work to empower and protect them.
- **All staff share responsibility** -for creating and maintaining safe environments.
- **Best-practice recruitment, supervision and training** – to ensure suitability of all persons working with children.
- **Risk management** – proactively identify, assess and manage risks of harm to children.
- **Open culture of communication and reporting**– We foster a culture of openness, inclusion, and awareness around child safety and encourage disclosures, complaints and reporting.
- **Commitment to continuous improvement** – we perform ongoing assessment and improvement to child safe practices.

Child Safe Standards

Laurie Lawrence Swim School adheres to the following **10 National Standards for Child Safe Organisations**.

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.
2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them, and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
8. Physical and online environments minimise the risk of harm to children and young people.
9. Implementation of child safe practices is regularly reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

Leadership, Governance and Accountability

- Laurie Lawrence Swim School's management team is responsible for embedding this policy into governance, culture, operations and decision-making.
- A designated Child Safe Officer (Centre Manager) will be appointed to implement this policy, monitor compliance and act as a point of contact for concerns.
- Governance bodies will receive regular reports on child-safe matters, risks, incidents and responses.
- All staff will be aware of their legal obligations and this policy.

Responsibilities of Employees

Child safety is a shared responsibility amongst all staff members and trainees. All employees have the following child safe responsibilities:

- Read, understand and follow all child safe policies and procedures.
- Maintain a duty of care towards all children under their instruction.
- Participate in all child-safe training and professional development.
- Treat all children equitably with respect and fairness.
- Create an environment where all people feel safe, respected and understood.
- Report concerns to the designated child safety officer and/or the relevant external authorities.
- Maintain an inclusive learning environment where all cultures, religions and diverse learning needs are respected.
- Seek consent and use visible, gentle contact when physical corrections are required.
- Set boundaries for maintaining a safe and nurturing learning environment for all participants.

Recruitment, Induction, and Training

- All staff positions (paid or volunteer) undergo thorough screening, including Working with Children Checks and reference checks.
- Hiring interviews will include questions about safeguarding experience and attitudes.
- Child safety responsibilities are outlined in position descriptions and staff agreements.
- Induction for new staff/volunteers will include the Child Safe Policy, Code of Conduct, how to recognise and report concerns, and how to respond to children's disclosures.
- Ongoing training in child protection and safeguarding standards is mandatory for all staff and volunteers. Maintain records of attendance and training completion.
- Continue online training modules provided in partnership with Worldwide Swim School and Child Safeguarding Australia.
- Regular reviews of staff suitability and ongoing monitoring of behaviour and practises.

Equity and Diversity

Laurie Lawrence Swim School recognises the diverse circumstances of children and young people attending our centres. We recognise that children's diverse circumstances can affect their level of safety. We are committed to fostering an environment where the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with a disability, children from Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, and those who form part of the LGBTIQ community feel respected and comfortable to express their concerns.

Signs and Indicators of Abuse

Child abuse refers to acts or omissions (neglect) that result in, or have the likelihood to result in, harm to a child or young person. The forms of abuse and their indicators are:

- **Physical abuse** – the use of deliberate physical force against a child or young person that intentionally or unintentionally results or has the likelihood of resulting in harm.

Potential indicators of physical abuse – Bruising, marks, broken bones, avoiding physical contact, covering up injuries and fear of adults.
- **Sexual abuse** – Any act that exposes a child to or involves a child or young person in sexual processes that are beyond their understanding or contrary to acceptable community standards. It can include fondling or penetration of genital areas and exposure to pornography. It can be perpetrated by family members / relatives or people outside of the family unit. Sexual abuse also includes child grooming. Child grooming refers to deliberate acts undertaken to establish a personal connection with a child or young person, to prepare them for sexual abuse. Grooming strategies include using favouritism, bribes and or giving gifts along with violating personal boundaries.

Potential indicators of sexual abuse – Unexplained pain or bleeding in the anal or genital areas, withdrawn or self-destructive behaviour, or children describing sexual acts beyond understanding appropriate for their age.
- **Emotional or Psychological abuse** – Inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts towards a child or young person and/or pattern of failing repeatedly over time to provide a child or young person with adequate non-physical nurturing and emotional availability. Emotional abuse damages a child or young person's self-esteem. Exposure to domestic violence is commonly regarded as a form of abuse. For the purpose of this policy it is included as a form of emotional abuse.

Potential indicators of emotional abuse – delayed physical or speech development, signs of self-harm, low self-esteem and lack of trust in people.
- **Neglect** – The failure to provide a child or young person with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for their emotional development and wellbeing. Neglectful behaviours are an act of omission or by wilful choice. Neglect can occur in the following areas – health, education, emotional development, nutrition and shelter / safe living conditions.

Potential indicators of neglect – Low weight for age, poor hygiene and complexion, stealing food, frequently late or absent, and being withdrawn.

The signs of abuse include physical and behavioural indicators. Individual indicators should not be assessed in isolation and should be looked at in the context of other potential indicators and the child or young person's personal circumstances or history.

Reporting and Responding to Concerns

All concerns, disclosures, or allegations of child abuse or harm are taken seriously and acted upon promptly and in accordance with legal requirements. Staff and volunteers must:

- Immediately respond to any disclosure, observation or suspicion of harm or abuse by reporting to the designated Child Safe Officer.
- Report any suspicion of child harm or risk to the relevant authorities (e.g., police, child protection services) and swim school management.
- Support the child and ensure their immediate safety and wellbeing allowing their voice to be heard and circumstances respected.
- Record relevant details objectively and confidentially, using relevant incident/concern form.
- Investigate internal concerns fairly, promptly and thoroughly, ensuring protection of the child and respecting natural justice for the person accused.
- Maintain confidentiality of all parties (except where reporting obligations override).
- After resolution, review the incident and update risk controls to prevent recurrence.

Risk Management

Risks to child safety are identified, assessed, and managed through regular reviews of activities, facilities, and staff conduct. Maintain clear procedures for managing high-risk situations and responding to emergencies.

- Identify potential risks of harm to children in programs, facilities (including pool, change rooms), transport, off-site excursions and online/digital interactions.
- Implement risk controls: e.g. adequate supervision ratios, safe changing practices, secure access to premises, appropriate behaviour protocols.
- Regularly review and update risk assessments.
- Involve children (where appropriate) and families in discussions about safety and environment.
- Ensure safe behaviours for children: e.g. children changing in appropriate supervised areas, transparency of adult/child interaction, ensuring privacy and dignity.

Complaints Handling

- Provide child-friendly and accessible ways for children, families, staff and others to raise concerns or complaints.
- Ensure that complaints are handled impartially, promptly and respectfully.
- Ensure there are no repercussions for people who report genuine concerns.
- Records of complaints, actions taken and outcomes will be maintained securely.
- Feedback from children and families about safety, environment and culture will be encouraged and acted upon.

Privacy and Record Keeping

- Maintain secure and confidential records relating to child safety incidents, staff screening and training.
- Ensure storage, access and disposal of records complies with applicable legislation.
- Access to sensitive records is limited to those who need it for legitimate child-safe purposes.

Partnerships with Parents, Children & Community

- Children are encouraged to express their views, feel safe and have a say in decisions affecting them. Provide child-friendly information about their rights and how to raise concerns.
- Promote a culture of shared responsibility for child safety with parents/carers, guardians, children and community stakeholders.
- Provide information to families about this policy and how to raise concerns or feedback.
- Listen to children's voices: provide opportunities (age-appropriate) for children to express concerns about safety, environment or culture.
- Collaborate with external agencies (e.g. health, social services) when necessary to support children's wellbeing.

Implementation

- This policy will be communicated to all staff, volunteers, contractors and families.
- All staff will sign an acknowledgement of understanding and compliance with this policy.
- Child safe practices will be embedded in all policies, procedures, planning, training and facilities.
- The designated Child Safe Officer will co-ordinate implementation and monitor compliance.
- The Swim School's leadership will allocate appropriate resources (time, training, monitoring) to embed this policy.

Contact Information

For questions or to report a child safety concern, please contact the Manager at Laurie Lawrence Swim School. Further information is available at reception and on our website.

Laurie Lawrence Swim School is dedicated to the ongoing protection, safety, and wellbeing of every child. We welcome feedback and encourage the involvement of children, families, and the wider community in maintaining a child safe environment.

Designated Child Safe Officer:

- **Banora Point** - Lee Simpson (Manager) 0755233177
banora@laurielawrenceswimschool.com.au
- **Burleigh Heads** - Louise Waller (Manager) 0449209727
burleigh@laurielawrenceswimschool.com.au

External Reporting:

- **Police** 000 or
- **Police non-emergencies** 131 444

Queensland

- **Department of Social Services** dss.gov.au
- **Child Safety After Hours Service Centre** 1800177135
- **Department Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety** 137468

New South Wales

- **Communities and Justice** dcj.nsw.gov.au or
- **Child Protection Helpline** 132111

Monitoring, Review and Continuous Improvement

- Changes to this policy are communicated to all staff, volunteers, families, and children.
- Policy reviewed as required to ensure ongoing compliance with best practice and legislative requirements.
- Staff feedback, incident data, audit findings, risk assessments and regulatory changes will inform review.

Relevant Legislation, Policies and Documents

Legislation:

- Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (QLD)
- Child Protection Act 1999 (QLD)
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)
- Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW)

Policies and Documents:

- LLSS Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Child friendly complaints form
- Complaints/Incident report form