

Information for Welfare Officers



Issue raised following an incident at a Swim Wales event:

There has been an issue raised with regard to the use of Skype/Facetime (other social media platforms are available) to record swimmers at meets and then effectively broadcast the footage to third parties. The incident in question was wholly innocent with the parents of an athlete using a social media platform to allow grandparents to watch a swim.

When this was quite rightly challenged, the question of “Where is this covered in the rules?” was raised.

Response from the ASA Safeguarding Team

Wavepower 2016-19, Section 2 provides guidance on the use of social networking (page 72-75) and guidance on photography (page 76 – 77). <http://www.swimming.org/asa/clubs-and-members/safeguarding-children/> As in previous years both sets of guidance apply if social media platforms are being used to share images or recordings.

For the avoidance of doubt the photography guidance applies to all images and recordings taken on any camera, mobile phone or other recording device and applies to all training sessions, activities and events run by ASA affiliated organisations. The social media guidance will apply if those images or recordings are being shared through any social media platform whether that sharing is happening instantaneously through live streaming or whether the material is being stored for sharing at a later time.

The recommended best practice covering consent and standards of decency apply in all cases.

The aim of both sets of guidance is to avoid:

- The use, adaptation, sharing, copying of images for child abuse purposes either electronically or in print;
- To avoid the possible identification and locating of children where there are safeguarding concerns;
- The possible identification of a child where an image is accompanied by significant personal information which can lead to a child being groomed.

It is recommended that the rules around taking images or recordings at ASA events is made clear at the earliest opportunity to those attending in the pre-event information and in any correspondence with the home clubs. It is often helpful to include a paragraph as to why the guidance is in place as many individuals will not be aware of why this can present a risk to children and adults. If participants, families and spectators are clearly advised before they attend and when they arrive at the event this can often avoid issues occurring.

The ASA Safeguarding Team is aware that some ASA events are run with only an Official Officer appointed for that event responsible for taking images or recordings which are usually made available later for participants and their families to access. In comparison we have



many events which allow photography and filming being run without issue following improved communication on the rules around images and recordings being taken at an event following the guidance in Wave power. There is no longer the requirement for any person attending an event to register any device they possess which is capable of recording images, as with technological development, this has proved no longer practical or beneficial.

Wavepower 2016-19 is now published so changes to text cannot be made until the new version in 2020.

However, a note will be sent to every ASA Club Welfare Officer requesting that clubs reinforce the messaging to their members and parents of members around ensuring they make themselves familiar with the rules around photography and filming swimmers at ASA events when they are away from the home club. If they have questions or comments about that to raise them if possible before the event so clarification can be given.

In the event that any official has to challenge someone at an event for taking images or filming they should be referred to the rules around this area for the event and in addition to the guidance provided in Wavepower 2016-19.

It is appreciated that officials will have limited time at a busy event to explain why the guidance in Wavepower is in place. Any individual can be referred to their home club Welfare Officer who holds a copy of Wavepower and will be able to explain the reasons why the ASA provides guidance and recommended best practice in this area. The Welfare Officer if required can come to the ASA Safeguarding Team if further support is required to ensure clear messaging is given.

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Please note that if the event is being run by Swim Wales or Scottish Swimming referrals should be made to the Home Nation Safeguarding Officer.