

# Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment of Harm

Guidance for safeguarding standards is provided by the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) and two documents: Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017) (ROI) and Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2017) (NI). These documents detail the safeguarding requirements for organisations working with young people. There are two mandatory documents to be completed by Swim Ireland, regions and clubs:

1. Risk Assessment of Harm
2. Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS)

## Risk Assessment of Harm

The risk assessment of harm is based on the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) and is required to be completed by Swim Ireland and all regions and clubs affiliated to Swim Ireland across the island of Ireland. The need to complete this document in Ireland is a legal one and in Northern Ireland it is required as good practice and is part of Swim Ireland's safeguarding standards.

The risk assessment requires each provider to undertake an assessment of the risk of harm to children where young people are involved in a relevant service and requires the provider to appoint a relevant person, state the risks and the measures taken to alleviate these risks. The risk assessment information is then included in the Child Safeguarding Statement.

In Swim Ireland:

- the provider is Swim Ireland, the region or the club
- the relevant service refers to the provision of aquatic activities for children and young people
- the relevant person is the Children's Officer (CO) at club, regional or national level

## Completing the Risk Assessment of Harm

Any risk of harm particular to an environment or situation is included and any specific risk to Swim Ireland, the region or club should be identified. The risk assessment template is available on the Swim Ireland website and should be used as guidance for clubs and regions. Additional risks identified as specific to a region or club must be added into the template document.

The risk assessment of harm is completed by the club or regional committee, as the provider, and must be signed and dated by an officer of the committee and the CO. The risk assessment must be uploaded to the region or club profile on the Swim Ireland membership system. The Swim Ireland risk assessment is completed and signed by the National Children's Officer (NCO) and CEO and displayed on the Swim Ireland website.

## Child Safeguarding Statement

The Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) outlines the principles, policies and procedures in this document to ensure the safety and well-being of children in relevant activities and identifies those responsible for overseeing the implementation of the policies. The CSS specifies the need to carry out a risk assessment of harm, as described, to assess the potential for harm to occur to young people during any Swim Ireland activities.

## Completing the CSS

Once the risk assessment of harm has been completed, the relevant committee must also complete the CSS. The CSS contains specific information in accordance with Children First Act 2015 (ROI). The CSS template is available on the Swim Ireland website and should be used as guidance for clubs and regions.

The CSS must be signed by an officer of the committee and the CO as the relevant person. In a club and region this will be the chairperson, treasurer or secretary and the regional or club CO. The CSS must be uploaded to the region or club profile on the Swim Ireland membership system. The Swim Ireland CSS is completed and signed by the CEO and the NCO as the relevant person.

## **Review of the Children Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment of Harm**

To assure best practice and good governance in a club or region the risk assessment should be reviewed by the relevant committee regularly (twice yearly is recommended).

The Children First Act 2015 (ROI) states the risk assessment of harm and the child safeguarding statement, **must be reviewed within 24 months** of a previous assessment, where the first risk assessment and child safeguarding statement were completed before 11th March 2018. There is now a set period for subsequent reviews, and this applies to all regions and clubs with under 18 membership. The risk assessment of harm and the CSS is required to be reviewed in the following specified periods:

1st September 2019 – 31st December 2019

1st September 2021 – 31st December 2021

1st September 2023 – 31st December 2023

Regions and clubs will be supported during these periods to complete their review through the CO and the committee.

### **New clubs**

New Clubs are required to complete a risk assessment on affiliation and thereafter during the specified review period as detailed.