

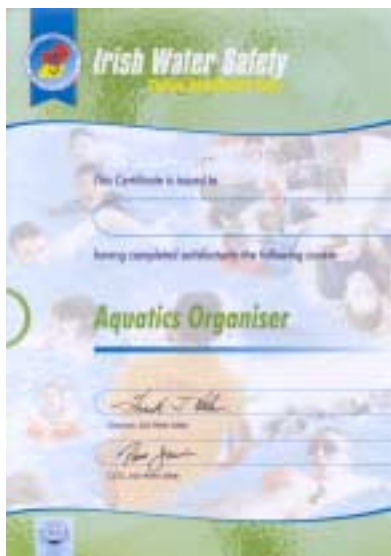


Irish Water Safety
Cumann Sábháilteacht Uisce

***In-Service Aquatics Courses
For Primary School Teachers***

Guidelines





AQUATICS ORGANISER

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE FROM:

Rescue Skills Handbook Chapter 1 and Appendix 1
Child Protection Handbook
Syllabus - Swim 1-5, Safety 1, Resuscitation 1 and 2
14 Step Poster

PERSONAL SAFETY IN AND AROUND WATER:

(see also Appendix)

- At pool – no running, diving, jumping, bombing
- No entry to pool until instructed
- Wait for swim teacher in specified location
- Entering the water by steps back facing water. Introduce other methods, e.g. climbing in, etc. later on
- Careful of chin on edge of pool when entering water
- No ducking, fighting
- Only swimmers in deep end
- Wear Hats
- No exit from pool area with permission.



HAZARDS OF WATER AND CORRECT PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH HAZARDS

(see also Appendix)

Indoor Hazards:

- Position of deep end and warning notices
- Overcrowding
- Disorderly behaviour
- Lack of water clarity
- Lighting failure
- Structural failure
- Slippery surfaces
- Emission of toxic gases or fluids
- Discovery of a casualty in the water
- Tiredness
- Diving or jumping
- Unsupervised spectators on deck
- Water temperature, too cold or too warm, causing fatigue and shivering
- Children running or climbing in the spectator area
- Untidy deck

Hazards of open water:

- Tides, currents, backwash, objects on the sea or river bed, unmarked changes in depths, weeds, unclear water etc.
- Safety list
- Is the water clear and unpolluted?
- Is the slope towards deep water sufficiently gentle?
- Are there any strong currents or heavy waves in the area?
- Are there any other water users in the area?
- Is there easy entry to and exit from the water?
- Are there any dangers from weeds, underwater rocks, shifting sands or holes?
- Bathers should be in supervised areas where possible and in the company of others



- Bathers should have a knowledge of simple rescues and of resuscitation
- The use of rings, air beds and other types of high buoyancy play things should be discouraged
- Bathers should stay within the limits of their ability
- Warning notices for the swimming area should be noted and followed
- Over robust play, jumping, diving, ducking others can be dangerous and harmful
- Swimmers should swim parallel to the shore
- Obey the 14 rules for safe swimming

WATER SAFETY SURVIVAL SKILLS

- Conservation of energy; floating, treading water, sculling, resting strokes
- Use of clothes as buoyancy aids
- Lifejackets
- Help and Huddle procedure
- Conservation of heat
- Floating objects
- Know about the dangers of hypothermia and how to treat it
- Simple Rescues: Voice, Reach, Throw, Wade

POOL HYGIENE

- Use toilet before entering pool
- Shower before entering pool
- Hair should be tied back or hat worn
- No outdoor shoes on pool deck
- Chewing gum and sweets not allowed in water
- Rubbish should be put in a bin
- Wash swim gear after use
- Children with some medical conditions should be excluded from the pool until medical advice has been obtained
- Be aware of:
 - Infectious diseases
 - Open wounds



- Coughs, colds and related infections
- Sore eyes and ear infections
- Children with following medical conditions should be notified to swim teacher: epilepsy, diabetes, asthma, arthritis, injuries, post operative conditions

ORGANISING A SCHOOL AQUATICS PROGRAMME

- Time allocation
- Equipment requirement
- Planning and timetabling
- How often will each class go swimming? What classes will you bring?
- Drawing up a rota of classes
- Replacing other PE activities (this term swimming, next term another activity)
- Pool time
- Permission for children
- Number attending and age groups
- Lifeguard
- Swimming teachers and pupil teacher ratio
- Transportation
- Insurance
- Costing
- Time-tabling and best use of pool
- Equipment
- Supervision
- First aid and emergencies
- Visit to pool before notifying parents
- Dealing with queries
- Collection of money and accounting procedures
- Running of sessions
- Awards

SCHOOL SWIMMING SAFETY POLICY

- Know rules of local pool
- Talk to lifeguard prior to visit
- Cover depths of pool with children
- Pre swimming safety considerations



- Medical conditions – swim teacher needs to know, bring inhalers & have available etc.
- Proper clothing as required by pool
- Jewellery – should not be allowed
- Staffing levels: What is an acceptable pupil/teacher ratio?
- Teacher should go with class
- Consider who stays with pupils left behind
- Accident reporting procedures
- School reporting procedures
- Pool Reporting procedures
- Written accident report
- School insurance is responsible as it is a school activity
- Discipline and acceptable behaviour
- What are the school rules?
- Head counts / Pal system
- Swimmers supervised at all times – on bank, in dressing rooms, waiting for bus, consider parental involvement
- Pool must be supervised at all times
- Use baskets
- Get out on the whistle
- Fifteen minutes to exit the pool
- Acceptance of conditions of hirer



Pre-Swimming Safety Considerations:

- Difficult and slow to progress children
- Staffing levels
- Attendance records
- Programme of work for term
- Progress reports
- Accident book and accident reporting procedures
- Discipline and acceptable behaviour
- Sanctions
- Hygiene discussed with pupils
- Safety discussed with pupils

Safety Principles for Teachers:

- Observe good principles at all times
- Do not enter the pool unless the teacher is present
- As the teacher you should be the first to arrive and the last to leave
- Good class control-Pupils should obey instructions immediately
- Make sure you have a plan in case of an emergency situation (whistle signals etc)
- Adequate safety equipment should be available
- Make sure your knowledge of Resuscitation is up to date
- Rope off your teaching area
- Do not allow pupils to fool around on the side of the pool or in the pool
- Make sure they are supervised at all times
- Ensure safe entry into water
- Deck clear of floats, etc.
- Warning signs, in place, deep end, rules, etc. Attention to be drawn to them
- Armbands must be well fitting and undamaged
- Goggles, only when necessary, as with nose clips. If goggles are not fitted properly they can be dangerous, also they must be put on correctly. Ear plugs can also cause problems.



- Wearing of caps should be worn for hygienic purposes. If hair is long, caps also keep hair out of mouth and eyes, as well as from around the neck.
- Useful suggestion is for different ability groups wear same colour caps, e.g. beginners group yellow, improvers red, etc. It is easy to spot a defector from one section to another.

PRACTICAL ISSUES

- Employment of swim teachers – how many?
- Dealing with pool management and staff
- Qualifications of lifeguards – Pool Lifeguard award, goes out of date and should be re-validated annually
- Employment of lifeguard: payment and qualifications
- Swim teachers / Preliminary swim teachers – know the difference
- Employment of teachers: payment and qualifications; are the swim teachers employed by the pool or the school?
- How many children?
- Parental involvement – parents rota, boys & girls dressing rooms
- Who helps smaller children to get dressed?
- Facility used - dimensions, access, transportation;
- What hours are available?
- What access is there? Do you need a bus? Walk from bus to pool?
- How will the pool be paid for?
- Shop around – public Vs private rates for schools
- Teaching area outside of water
- Viewing area
- Treatment area
- Changing facilities
- What equipment is needed and available
- Pupils remaining behind must have work to do



EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

- Be familiar with pools N.O.P. and E.O.P.
- Emergency signal – everyone should know what it is;
- Responsibilities - phone, other pupils etc.; care of casualty; care of pupils - calm, re-assure; recording; evacuation, follow-up.
- Supervision
- Treatment
- Phone
- Ambulance and hospital
- Notifying parents

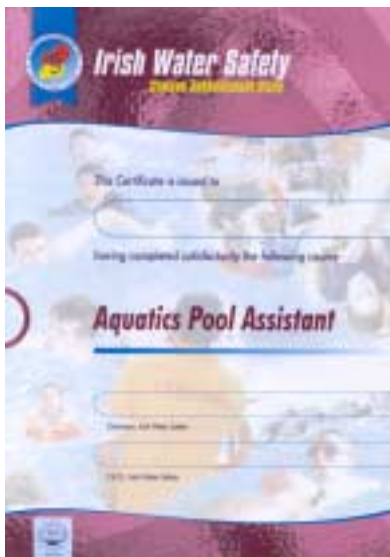
EVALUATION AND MONITORING OF PROGRAMME

- Progress reports
- Skill level
- Swim Awards
- Confidence
- Problems
- Attendance (children's and yours)
- Promoting and demoting pupils
- Behavioural problems

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

- Good practices should be observed
- Read and have a copy of Children first. (Dept. of Health)
- Screen personnel working for you
- Screen parents working for you
- Supervision duties particularly the dressing room
- Follow the procedures outlined in the guidelines when an allegation is reported to you.
- Excessive bruising on child's body





AQUATICS POOL ASSISTANT

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE FROM:

Chapter 3 + Chapter 10 – Swimming Teaching and Coaching, Level 1
Teaching the Non-swimmer

Objective: To improve confidence and watermanship by using methods which are enjoyable.

ENTERING AND EXITING THE POOL

- Stepping down the ladder
- Face the steps
- Hold with both hands
- Take one step at a time
- Move along, holding onto the bar
- Sitting entry
- Both hands to one side
- Turn to face the wall
- Lower the body carefully, careful of chin and teeth
- Exit via ladder, climbing onto the bank

CONFIDENCE IN THE WATER

- Walking in water: knees bent, legs apart, shoulders under the water, sliding flat feet on bottom



- Confidence Exercises
- Underwater Confidence Exercises
- Confidence Exercises to Improve Movement in the Water
- Improving Water Confidence Using Games
- Follow the leader
 - Tag games
 - Walking races and relays
 - Simon says
 - Follow my thumb
 - Throw and collect games
 - Movement to song e.g. Ring-a-ring-a-rosie, hokey pokey
 - See-saw game
- Push and Glide Exercises
 - Standing 3/5 steps from partner and jumping/diving towards them
 - Shoulders in the water – push and glide towards partner
- Propulsion Exercises
- Regaining Stance

From Prone Position:

- Lift head
- Push down past the hips with hands
- Knees come forward, tuck
- Allow feet to go to bottom
- Stand up

From Supine Position:

- Bring the head forward and shoulders up and forward – sit up in the bed
- Hands push down past the hips
- Tuck up knees
- Allow feet to sink to the bottom of the pool



APPENDICES

Syllabus Items

Swim 1 Award

Swim 2 Award

Swim 3 Award

Swim 4 Award

Swim 5 Award

Safety 1 Award

Resuscitation Awards

Aquatics Organiser

Aquatics Pool Assistant

Rescue Skill Handbook Chapter 1

Rescue Skills Handbook Appendix 1

Child Protection Procedures



GROUP ONE – SWIM AWARDS

PHASED INTRODUCTION OF SKILLS

SWIM 1: Immersion of face
Push and Glide – prone (front) position
Regaining standing position
Use of kick board

SWIM 2: Entry for unknown conditions
Push and Glide – supine (back) position
Regaining standing position supine
Prone swim
Supine swim
Change from prone to supine
Change from supine to prone

SWIM 3: Jump in Swimming:
Frontcrawl
Backcrawl
Breast Stroke
Inverted breast stroke
Sculling

SWIM 4: Deep water swimming
Straddle jump
Simple dive
Treading water

SWIM 5: Standing dive
Side stroke

Swim 1 – four metres
Swim 2 – ten metres
Swim 3 – forty metres
Swim 4 – forty five metres
Swim 5 – ninety five metres

Note: Instructor and Examiner should ensure that the depth of water is suitable and safe for entry.



SWIM TEST 1

AIM:

To test candidate's acquisition of confidence to perform basic movements i.e. watermanship

PREREQUISITES:
None

AWARD:
Certificate

SWIM TEST 1

GUIDELINES

TEST ITEMS	REQUIREMENTS	POSITIVE ELEMENTS	NEGATIVE ELEMENTS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oral – Personal Safety. 2. Show ability to immerse face in water. 3. Demonstrate: Push and Glide in prone position. Regain standing position. 4. Demonstrate: Propulsion with the aid of a kick board or other suitable support. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Basic safety do's and don'ts 2. No time limit. Quick duck sufficient. 3. Short glide. 4. Face need not be immersed. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Feet off bottom in horizontal position</p>	

This test may be examined by an Instructor



SWIM TEST 2

AIM:
To test candidate's ability in progressive skills of watermanship.

PREREQUISITES:
None

AWARD:
Certificate

SWIM TEST 2

GUIDELINES

TEST ITEMS	REQUIREMENTS	POSITIVE ELEMENTS	NEGATIVE ELEMENTS
1. Oral – Personal Safety.	1. Basic safety do's and don'ts		
2. Demonstrate entry for unknown conditions (sit down / slip in.)	2. Instructor should ensure that conditions are safe.	Careful considered movement into water	Diving, jumping. Too quick a decent.
3. (a) Push and Glide in supine position. Regain standing position. (b) Swim 5 m prone. (c) Swim 5 m supine.	3. (b) Any stroke on prone acceptable. (c) Any stroke on supine acceptable.	Ability to regain standing position.	
4. Show ability to turn from prone to supine.	4. Any method of turning is acceptable. NOTE: reverse is acceptable.		Contact with bottom or sides.
5. Show ability to turn from supine to prone.			

This test may be examined by an Instructor



SWIM TEST 3

AIM:

To test candidate's ability in progressive skills of watermanship.

PREREQUISITES:

None

AWARD:

Certificate

SWIM TEST 3

GUIDELINES

TEST ITEMS	REQUIREMENTS	POSITIVE ELEMENTS	NEGATIVE ELEMENTS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oral – Personal Safety. 2. Demonstrate entry by means of jumping. 3. Show ability to do the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Swim 10 m Frontcrawl (b) Swim 10 m Backcrawl (c) Swim 10 m Breast Stroke (d) Swim 5 m Inverted breast stroke 4. Show ability to scull 5 m. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Basic safety dos and don'ts, but increasing the range and the level of knowledge. 2. Instructor should ensure that conditions are safe. 3. These swims need not be continuous <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) arms and legs to be used (b) arms and legs to be used (c) arms and legs to be used (d) Float / arms optional 4. Movement in either direction is acceptable in supine position. 	<p>Efficiency rather than style or technique.</p>	

This test may be examined by an Instructor.

SWIM TEST 4

AIM:

To test progression from skills included in Tests 1, 2, 3 and to develop the candidate's deep water swimming ability.

PREREQUISITES:

None

AWARD:

Certificate

Water Depth for this Test: Minimum of 1.8 metres.

SWIM TEST 4

GUIDELINES

TEST ITEMS	REQUIREMENTS	POSITIVE ELEMENTS	NEGATIVE ELEMENTS
1. Oral – Personal Safety.	1. Basic safety dos and don'ts, but increasing the range and the level of knowledge.		
2. Demonstrate entry to the water by means of a straddle jump.	2. Instructor should ensure that conditions are safe.		Face submerged
3. Show ability to enter the water by means of any simple dive (e.g. sitting or kneeling)	3. Instructor should ensure that conditions are safe. (Water Depth: not less than 1.8m)	Push off with feet. Head down arms extended.	Feet entering first
4. (a) Swim 15 m Frontcrawl (b) Swim 15 m Back crawl (c) Swim 15 m Breast stroke	4. These swims need not be continuous		
5. Show ability to tread water for a period of 1 minute.	5. Candidate is permitted to use both arms and legs at all stages.		Face submerged

This test may be examined by an Instructor.

SWIM TEST 5

AIM:
To test progression from skills included in Tests 1,2,3,4 and as a preparatory step to Safety 2.

PREREQUISITES:
None

AWARD:
Certificate

SWIM TEST 5

GUIDELINES

TEST ITEMS	REQUIREMENTS	POSITIVE ELEMENTS	NEGATIVE ELEMENTS
1. Oral – Personal Safety.	1. Basic safety dos and don'ts, but increasing the range and the level of knowledge.		
2. Demonstrate entry to the water by means of a standing dive.	2. Instructor should ensure that conditions are safe. Lunge or plunge dive acceptable (Water Depth: not less than 2m.)		
3. Show ability to tread water for a period of 1 minute.	3. Candidate is permitted to use both arms and legs at all stages		Face submerged under water.
4. (a) Swim 25 m Frontcrawl (b) Swim 25 m Back crawl (c) Swim 25 m Breast stroke (d) Swim 10 m Inverted breast stroke (e) Swim 10 m Side stroke	4. These swims need not be continuous (d) Use of arms optional (e) Use of arms optional		

This test may be examined by an Instructor.

SAFETY 1 AWARD

AIM:

To test principles of water safety and simple rescue techniques especially for adults whose lack of swimming skills precludes them from further lifesaving training.

PREREQUISITES:

Minimum age 10 years.

AWARD:

Certificate

Candidate may be examined by an Instructor

SAFETY 1

GUIDELINES

TEST ITEMS	REQUIREMENTS	POSITIVE ELEMENTS	NEGATIVE ELEMENTS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resuscitation 1 (Theory and Practice). 2. Oral Test: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Personal Safety. (b) Hazards in open water situations. (c) Principles of simple rescue. (d) Correct follow up procedures. 3. Demonstrate the following simple rescues: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Voice contact. (b) Use of buoyancy objects, with no line attached. (c) Un-weighted rope. (d) Ring Buoy. (e) Reaching Rescue. (f) Wading Rescue. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As specified in the Resuscitation Handbook 2. As per Rescue Skills Manual 3. Demonstration of simple rescue techniques. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (f) The rescuer should not proceed beyond waist depth. 	Recognition – Correct assessment – Appropriate action.	Incorrect technique. Poor choice of rescue.

N.B. – THE CANDIDATE IS NOT QUALIFIED TO ATTEMPT A SWIMMING RESCUE

RESUSCITATION AWARDS

AIM:

To ensure that candidates recognise a respiratory emergency and can take practical steps to establish an airway and administer mouth to mouth and mouth to nose resuscitation if necessary.

PREREQUISITES:

None.

AWARD:

Certificate

VALIDITY:

2 years.

MAY BE EXAMINED BY AN INSTRUCTOR.

AIM:

To ensure that candidates recognise a respiratory emergency and take instant steps to support the victims failing systems to prevent further deterioration.

PREREQUISITES:

None.

AWARD:

Certificate

VALIDITY:

2 years.

AIM:

To complement the knowledge in Resuscitation 2 with the recognition of a cardiopulmonary emergency and to take steps to support the victim in such circumstances.

PREREQUISITES:

Minimum age: 15 years

AWARD:

Certificate

VALIDITY:

2 years.

AIM:

To complement the knowledge in Resuscitation 2 with the recognition of a cardiopulmonary emergency and to take steps to support the victim in such circumstances.

PREREQUISITES:

Minimum age: 15 years old, must be in an Instructor programme or a member of a team, which may be required to perform two, man CPR.

AWARD:

Certificate

VALIDITY:

2 years.

NOTE: RESUSCITATION TRAINING MANEQUIN MUST BE USED

RESUSCITATION 1

RESUSCITATION 2

RESUSCITATION 3

RESUSCITATION 4

TEST ITEMS

1. Answer questions on recognition of respiratory failure.
2. Demonstrate procedures to:
 - (a) Establish an airway
 - (b) Administer mouth to mouth and mouth to nose resuscitation.
 - (c) Deal with vomiting situations.
 - (d) Candidates must satisfy the Examiner on their of the return of spontaneous breathing, including demonstration of the semi-prone position.

TEST ITEMS

1. Answer questions on the respiratory system, including the function of the airways, lungs and muscles involved in respiration.
2. Have knowledge of composition of inhaled and exhaled air.
3. Candidates must satisfy the examiner on their knowledge of the various causes of asphyxiation and their ability to diagnose such cases.
4. Be able to demonstrate effective skills to administer EAR by both mouth to mouth and mouth to nose methods including an ability to diagnose and treat alternative circumstances, which may present themselves in an emergency.
5. Candidates must satisfy examiners on their recognition of the return of spontaneous breathing and the total follow up or aftercare treatment, including demonstration of semi-prone position.
6. Answer questions on any aspect of EAR.

TEST ITEMS

1. Resuscitation 2.
2. Answer questions on knowledge of the circulatory system and the composition of the blood and the function of the particles.
3. Candidates must satisfy the examiner on their ability to recognise a cardiac arrest and their diagnosis of pulselessness.
4. Be able to demonstrate effective skills to administer cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, one operator only. Be able to diagnose and treat alternative circumstances, which may present themselves in such an emergency.
5. Candidates must satisfy the examiner on their ability to take follow up or aftercare treatment, including demonstration of semi-prone position.
6. Answer questions on any aspect of CPR.

TEST ITEMS

1. Resuscitation 3.
2. Answer questions on knowledge of the circulatory system and the composition of the blood and the functions of the particles.
3. Candidates must satisfy the examiner on their ability to recognise a cardiac arrest and their diagnosis of pulselessness.
4. Be able to demonstrate effective skills to administer cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, both 1 and 2 operators. Be able to diagnose and treat alternative circumstances, which may present themselves in such an emergency.
5. Candidates must satisfy the examiner on their ability to take follow up or aftercare treatment, including demonstration of semi-prone position.
6. Answer questions on any aspect of CPR.

AQUATICS ORGANISER AWARD

Aim:

To give Primary Teachers a knowledge of Water Safety which can be taught to primary school children in the classroom. To give the teacher knowledge of the requirements for formulating and implementing a school's aquatics programme taking account of safety, hygiene and practical requirements.

Teachers who obtain this award will be equipped to teach the theory of the Primary School's Aquatics curriculum and to organise a programme in aquatics, taking account of safety, hygiene, and practical requirements.

Prerequisites:

- Qualified or Student Primary School Teacher.
- Candidates must have completed a course as set out below under recognized course teachers. Candidates being assessed must have attended for at least 75% of the course.

Award:

Certificate.

Course Syllabus:

Candidates shall participate in a course of not less than 6 hours theory with continuous assessment by tutor(s) and final assessment by Examiner.

Test Items:

Attendance at 75% of course with continuous assessment.

Course content:

- Personal Safety in and around water;
- Hazards of water and correct procedure for dealing with hazards;
- Pool hygiene;
- Organising a school aquatics programme: time allocation; equipment requirement; planning and timetabling.
- School swimming safety policy: rules of local pool; pre swimming safety considerations - medical, clothing, jewellery etc.; staffing levels - pupil/teacher ratio; accident reporting procedures; insurance; discipline and acceptable behaviour.
- Practical issues: facility used - dimensions, access, transportation; employment of swim teachers, dealing with pool management and staff; qualifications of lifeguards; parental involvement.
- Emergency action plan: emergency signal; responsibilities - phone, other pupils etc.; care of casualty; care of pupils - calm, re-assure; recording; evacuation.
- Evaluation and monitoring of programme.

Child protection procedures.

Note: To be taught by qualified instructors who are also swim teachers.

AQUATICS POOL ASSISTANT AWARD

Aim:

To ensure that Pool Assistants possess a basic knowledge and skills, which enable them to work with fully qualified Swim Teachers in the teaching of the Aquatics programme for Primary Schools.

Teachers who complete this award will be capable of assisting a fully qualified swim teacher in the implementation of the Primary School's Aquatics programme at the swimming pool.

Prerequisites:

- Qualified or Student Primary School Teacher.
- Aquatics Organiser Award.
- Have completed a course as set out below under recognized course tutors. Candidates being assessed must have attended for at least 75% of the course.

Course Syllabus:

Candidates shall participate in a course of not less than 4 hours theory, 4 hours resuscitation and 6 hours practical, including water work and teaching classes from the bank of the pool, with continuous assessment by tutor(s) and final assessment by a Water Safety Examiner.

Course content:

- Swim 1 and 2.
- Safety 1.
- Resuscitation 1 and 2.
- Teaching safe entry and exit to and from the water (excluding jumping and diving).
- Teaching buoyancy and propulsion: walk in shallow water, jump, side-step, run across the pool; floating/sinking objects; balance, rotation and recovery exercises; water-based ball games.
- Teaching Beginners: confidence exercises; movement / balance; breathing; submerging; floating; regaining stance – prone; regaining stance – supine; push and glide.
- Strategies for teaching: communication; lesson planning; ability grouping; evaluation.

Award:

Certificate.

Test Items:

- Attendance at 75% of course with continuous assessment.
- Swim 1 and 2.
- Safety 1.
- Resuscitation 1 and 2.
- One 5-minute lesson to a group of not less than 4 in the pool.

Note: To be taught by qualified instructors who are also swim teachers.

RESCUE SKILLS HANDBOOK

CHAPTER 1 PERSONAL SAFETY

INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, our rivers, lakes, beaches and swimming pools are seen as sources of relaxation, enjoyment and leisure. However, experience has taught us that in water there are certain limits beyond which we cannot or should not safely go. There is, indeed a certain amount of knowledge of our aquatic environment that must be acquired in order to ensure personal safety. This chapter deals with certain aspects of personal safety around the home, while swimming, or at leisure activities.

1. SAFETY AROUND THE HOME

Every year people die needlessly in drowning accidents in back gardens, farmyards etc.

Children can drown in very shallow water, in such places as the stream or drain at the end of the garden, the fish or lily pond, the play pool or swimming pool, the well, barrel or water tank, the septic tank or slurry pit.

These are also hazards for the old and feeble. Young children should be constantly supervised when playing in or near water. Wells, water barrels or tanks should be covered with wire mesh. Drains, streams, pools should be adequately fenced to prevent accidents and unsupervised use.

Safety around the home is in your own hands.

2. SWIMMERS AND DIPPERS

Analyses of drowning statistics show that this general group is still the one at highest risk. There are many reasons for accidents occurring but here we look at some of the most common.

CAUSES OF ACCIDENTS

- Inadequate supervision
- Incorrect use of high buoyancy objects e.g. airbeds, etc.
- Showing-off
- Lack of local knowledge
- Overestimation of ability



- Intoxication

HAZARDS OF OPEN WATER

Open water locations are still used by the majority of bathers. The dangers associated with these areas include tides, currents, backwash, objects on the sea or riverbed, unmarked changes in depths, weeds, unclear water, etc. These areas may be unsupervised and there may be few onlookers.

Common sense should guide a person to a swimming area supervised by Lifeguards. In the absence of such supervision, however, the area should be checked out for hazards and warning signs before entering the water. The following check list will be useful to the swimmer or bather when selecting a safe place.

- Is the water clear and unpolluted?
- Is the slope towards deep water sufficiently gentle?
- Are there any strong currents or heavy waves in the area?
- Are there any other water users in the area?
- Is there easy entry to and exit from the water?
- Are there any dangers from weeds, underwater rocks, shifting sands or holes?

SHALLOW WATER

Paddling, dipping or swimming in shallow water can be a pleasant and enjoyable recreation. It can also be relatively free of danger if a few simple guidelines are followed.

- Bathing should be in supervised areas where possible and in the company of others.
- Bathers should have a knowledge of simple reaching rescues and of resuscitation.
- The use of rings, airbeds and other types of high buoyancy playthings should be strongly discouraged. Currents, tides or winds can carry them into deep water.
- Bathers should stay within the limits of their ability. Overconfidence can easily lead a person into danger.
- Warning notices for the swimming area should be noted and followed.
- Over-robust play, jumping, diving, ducking other, etc., can be dangerous and harmful.
- Every opportunity should be availed of to develop the skills of swimming.
- The bathers should be continually on the lookout for holes, soft mud, etc.



- Swimmers should swim parallel to the shore.



3. SAFETY FOR ANGLERS

Those who engage in angling whether on the sea shore, river bank or lake side must be constantly alert to the hazards, many of which are inherent to the angling area but some of which may stem directly from the angler's own actions. Freak waves, uneven or slippery ground, steep or crumbling banks and tidal conditions, as well as the angler's dress and equipment, can present problems of safety which may be foreseen and guarded against. Once again, the elementary precaution of learning swimming and survival skills must be stressed. The technique of using angling equipment such as waders or plastic containers as an aid in self-rescue is a simple one, but extremely effective in case of accidental immersion. Anglers are expected to take the normal safety precautions as outlined in the Irish Water Safety relevant leaflets, including the following: -

- Staying within sight and hearing of others.
- Checking the fishing site carefully
- Ensuring a solid and secure footing.
- Maintaining a close watch on water and weather conditions.
- Keeping back from waters edge to avoid danger from freak waves.

4. ORGANISED GROUPS

Holiday outings or day trips to a beach, lake or swimming resort organised by schools, firms, clubs or communities can be enjoyable and pleasant. They should be kept that way by taking some sensible safety measures: -

- Ensure that the individual in overall charge is known to everyone in the group.
- Check that he/she knows the numbers in the group and their names.
- Appoint someone to be in charge of the group while they are in the water.
- Survey the bathing area and make simple rules – such as defining a fixed bathing area, having a system of communication through signals, swimming in pairs or groups.

The person in charge should be aware of any individual disability among the members of his/her group, such as asthmatic conditions or epileptic tendencies, which are not immediately apparent, and which would require special attention. A knowledge of the swimming abilities within the group is a prerequisite for the organiser.

Finally, the Lifeguard should be contacted on arrival at the beach, and notified of detail so the group and the proposed activities.



RESCUE SKILLS HANDBOOK

APPENDIX 1

OPEN WATER HAZARDS

Immersion in open water can be an entirely different experience from swimming in a pool or quiet pond. Swimmers can experience many dangers that are generally categorized under the following headings:

- a) Surf
- b) Weather
- c) Environmental
- d) Marine Life

(a) SURF CONDITIONS

In large bodies of water, powerful and opposing forces create surf conditions that prove difficult or impossible for the inexperienced. The follow result:

- (i) Waves
- (ii) Sets and Lulls
- (iii) Undertow
- (iv) Rips
- (v) Lateral Currents
- (vi) Tides

(i) Waves

From small lake ripples to huge ocean swells, waves are usually caused by the wind. It should be noted that while wave motions travel, the water does not. Large steep waves breaking close to shore are particularly dangerous to young children and the elderly, since the rushing falling water can knock them from their feet and roll them about under the surface.

(ii) Sets and Lulls

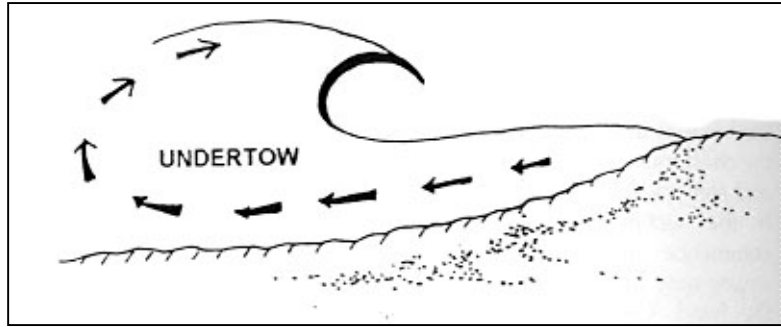
A set is a series of large breaking waves; a lull is a relative calm between breakers that enables swimmers to swim out from shore.

(iii) Undertow

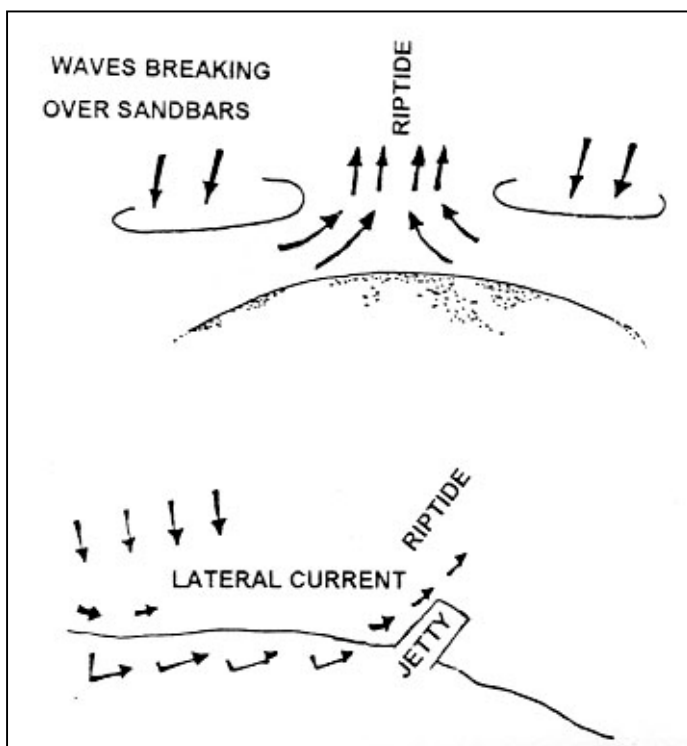
Also called backwash. Prevalent on steep beaches at high or near high tide. The returning wave gains speed because of the steep incline, returning to the surf with great force. The flow is beneath the surface, swimmers feeling as if their feet are



being pulled out from under them and are being pulled out to sea. The waves moving towards shore on the surface combined with the undertow knock the swimmer over. Undertow is particularly dangerous to children or non-swimmers at the water's edge. The swimmer can allow himself to be carried out and then return with the next wave.



(iv) Rips



A rip tide is a current running from shallow water near the shore out to sea. It may be of any size, width, shape or speed and can be caused by sandbars, piers and jetties blocking a lateral current. Wind and wave conditions that cause an unusual build-up of water, ultimately result in rips as the excess volume of water must finally return to sea. Rips may appear different than the surrounding surf, look choppy, look dark or sand laden, and have foam or debris on the surface. Swimmers caught in a rip should swim diagonally out of them or let themselves be carried to a point where the rip disperses and then return by a safe route.

(v) Lateral Currents

Sid currents are created when the surf increases in size. In large surf the waves do not approach the beach straight on, but at an angle, it is this angle that causes the lateral current and will soon become stronger due to the parallel direction of the surf. Swimmers can bounce along in a lateral current and soon be in the middle of a rip.

(vi) Tides

The danger to swimmers created by tides, is that people may underestimate the water depth, imagine that the bottom should be there when they put their feet down. An area considered shallow in the morning could be dangerous a few hours or even minutes later. Most swimmers manage to deal with it but poor swimmers may be in



difficulty under these circumstances. Waders playing on a sandbar could find that the water depth has become beyond their depth.

(b) WEATHER

Because the strength and direction of the wind has a significant effect on the type and size of waves, we need to take an interest in weather forecasts.

If the wind is perpendicular to shore, incoming waves are larger as the crests are pushed up onto the beach. Wind coming in at an angle to the beach tends to create cross-waves and rough, choppy water. Rips may result. If the wind moves from shore to sea, low or medium sized waves are reduced in strength. High surf and offshore winds result in 'dumper', waves which tend to pound onto shore rather than roll up the beach. Offshore winds create special hazards for those on inflatables, the waves moving them shoreward but the wind exerting a more powerful force out to sea.

(c) ENVIRONMENTAL

The geography of the area may also contain many unexpected hazards for the swimmer. They include the following:

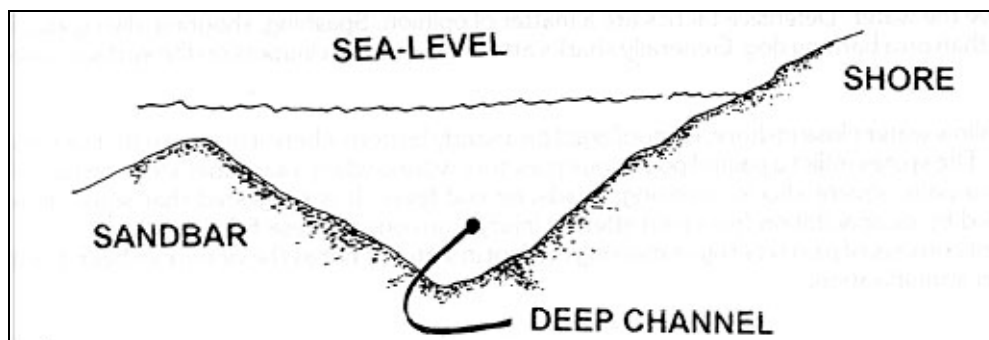
- (i) Inshore holes
- (ii) Sand Bars
- (iii) River Currents
- (iv) Submerged objects

(i) Inshore Holes

Are dug into the sand by wave action. Bathers can easily step from inches of water into water over their heads. The holes may be from several feet to several metres in diameter and found at any depth.

(ii) Sand Bars

Sand bars are caused by a build up of material transported by a lateral current. The currents at this point are unable to move the deposited material. A deep channel forms near the beach. The water covering the sand bar may be inches deep while the water in the channel may be quite deep. Poor or non-swimmers can often be stranded on a bar as the tide comes in.



(iii) River Currents

These are most deceptive. They rarely follow the contour of the riverbed, even in comparatively straight stretches and are continually changing. Governed by projecting headlands, backwaters, islands and winding of the river's course, the river's direction of flow wanders from shore to shore. Eddies and reverse currents of varying intensity may be found near the riverbanks. The intensity of the current is based on the volume of water and the rate of riverbed drop.

(iv) Submerged Objects

Because of the danger of head or other injury from striking submerged objects, bathers must never dive into water unless they are sure that the area is clear. Along the coastline the main danger is from hidden rocks, but it is in the inland waterways – rivers, lakes and especially canals that the greatest danger lies from articles such as old beds, bicycles etc., which are dumped illegally and indiscriminately.

(d) MARINE LIFE

Irish coastal waters lack monsters of such ferocity as the Great White shark, Sea Wasp jellyfish of the South Seas and Piranha of the Amazon Basin. We have however life forms whose influence ranges from mere discomfort to some who can be quite a handful. The following is an example of the many creatures that fall into this wide category:

- (i) Sea Urchins
- (ii) Barnacles
- (iii) Undersea Shell Growth
- (iv) Seaweed/Kelp
- (v) Eels
- (vi) Jellyfish
- (vii) Sea Lions/Seals
- (viii) Sharks
- (ix) Weever Fish

(i) Sea Urchins

These vary in size from one to eight inches in diameter, are found in nearly all rocky areas. The spines are sharp and brittle and range in length from one quarter inch to six inches. When a swimmer bumps against an urchin, the spines will puncture the skin and in most cases break off. This leaves a portion of the spine under the skin by virtue of its natural barbed surface. They are difficult to remove, they cause a



stinging wound and usually remain in place until they are absorbed, wash their way out or are surgically removed.

(ii) Barnacles

A common crustacean which grows on rocks, pilings etc. They are sharp and will cut the swimmer if she comes in forceful contact with them.

(iii) Undersea Shell Growth

Contact with shell life requires a certain amount of caution. In all cases the shells are sharper and more dangerous in bays and inlets than in deep water where no surge is present. Most fish skins, spines etc., are covered with bacteria and micro-organisms which may infect small skin abrasions and cause local infections.

(iv) Seaweed/Kelp

The growth is usually heavy only where the leaves float on the surface. Below the stalks are similar to the trunks of mini trees. A swimmer can become entangled but it would be the result of carelessness, panic or inexperience. By gently sliding the strands off rather than tugging, the swimmer can free herself.

(v) Eels

These snake-like creatures hide in holes and crevices in the rocks. They have a reputation for viciousness which is usually the result of being excited or disturbed by a diver's hand, groping in his lair. The eel's reputation was earned from its performance when injured or hurt when it goes completely berserk, attacking anything in its reach.

(vi) Jellyfish

Not all types are harmful but some types carry a potent stinging arrangement in the tentacles which hang below the umbrella shaped body. When the swimmer comes in contact with the tentacles stinging cells are injected into the body. Persons with light, dry skins are affected worst. The Portuguese Man-of-War – not likely to be found off our coasts has a nerve poison chemically related to cobra venom. Less potent species is the little Sailor-by-the-Wind. The deadliest of all, the Chironex Fleeckeri, commonly known as the Sea Wasp. Found off the coast of Australia, it is one of the most lethal venomous marine animals. The venom acts directly upon the heart muscle and produces instant cardiac paralysis.

(vii) Sea Lions/Seals



Generally friendly and curious creatures whose skill in water is not matched by swimmers or divers. An accidental situation can occur as a result of a miscalculation. The exception to the friendly rule is the old bull seal protecting his harem or a cow with her pups. In general keep your distance.

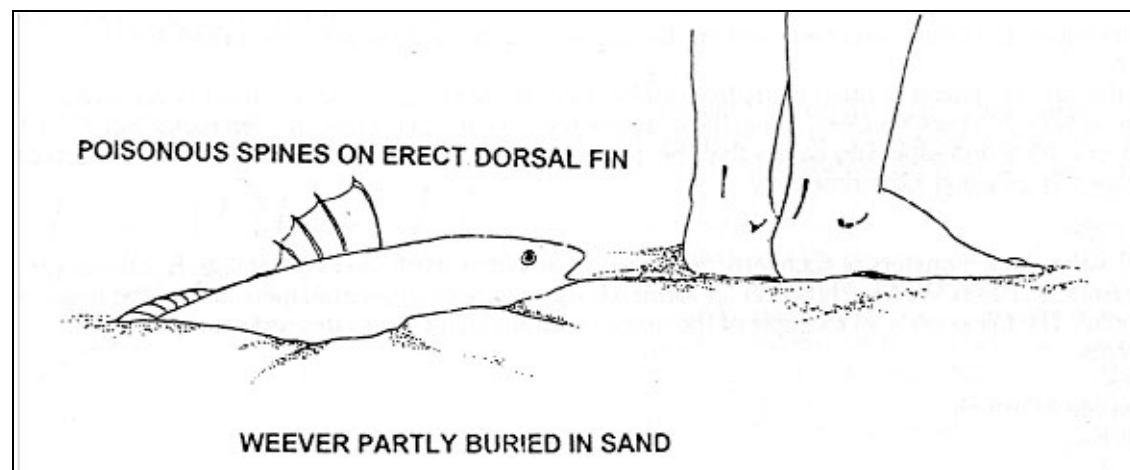


(viii) Sharks

Dangerous sharks do exist in the oceans and they occasionally attack. These attacks are extremely rare, but the publicity is generally magnified out of all proportion. Most of the time a shark will ignore you and just swim on, however the safest policy is simply to leave the water. Defensive tactics are a matter of opinion. Splashing, shouting, diving etc., have no more assurance of success than on a barking dog. Generally sharks attack wounded swimmers on the surface, bleeding persons, animals or fish.

(ix) Weever Fish

Usually found in shallow water close inshore, camouflaged on a sandy bottom where it digs in so that only the eyes, mouth and fin spines project. The spines inflict a painful poisonous puncture wound when a swimmer steps on the fish. The poison may cause very severe pain, sever shock, vomiting, headache and fever. It is suggested that some drowning in safe beaches may be caused by incapacitation from pain after an injury from one of these fish. Immediate treatment consists of pain relief by immersing the foot in water as hot as the victim can bear. Further treatment may consist of tetanus immunization.



Guidelines

for

Irish Water Safety Members

regarding

Child Protection

(Code of Ethics and Good Practice)



The Child Care Act, 1991, defines "child " as "a person under the age of 18 years other than a person who is or has been married.

In these guidelines the words child and young person are used interchangeably and refer to a person under 18 years of age.

The principle, which should inform best practice in child protection, is that the welfare of the child is of paramount importance.

" All organisations, whether statutory or voluntary, have an overall corporate responsibility to safeguard children, and should pay particular attention to

- Safe and clearly defined methods of selecting staff and volunteers
- Developing effective procedures for the reporting and management of child protection concerns
- Identifying a designated staff member/volunteer to act as a liaison with outside agencies and as a resource person to any staff member or volunteer who has child protection concerns. The designated person will be responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to the Health Boards or An Garda Síochána.

(Children First - National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children - 1999)



Purpose of Guidelines

1. These guidelines are for use by all members of the Irish Water Safety Association in their dealings with the public.
2. The purpose of the guidelines is to:
 - Provide members with basic information on the nature of child abuse
 - Inform members on the procedures they should follow if they are informed a case of child abuse is occurring or they themselves are suspicious that it is occurring
 - Raise members' awareness of the necessity for good practice so as to help to ensure the protection of young people from abuse and the protection of members against false accusations of abuse.
3. A member could encounter a situation regarding child abuse in a number of ways, including the following:
 - A young person discloses to a member that he/she is being abused:
 - A young person discloses to a third party who, in turn, tells the member:
 - A member may overhear other young people discussing their concerns about a particular young person:
 - A member witnesses abuse:
 - An allegation or report is made to a member:
 - A third party informs the member of his/her suspicions or concerns that a young person is being abused.

The Nature of Child Abuse

1. Child abuse occurs when a child is ill - treated in some manner and requires protection.
2. Child abuse is the abuse of power over a young person by an adult or another person in a way which disadvantages the young person and to which the young person cannot give informed consent.



3. Child abuse can be categorised into four different types:

- Neglect
- Emotional Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse

A child may be subjected to more than one form of abuse at any given time.

4. The National Guidelines have adopted the following definitions of child abuse.

- **Neglect**

Neglect is normally defined in terms of *omission*, where a child suffers *significant harm* or impairment of development by being deprived of food, warmth, clothing, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults or medical care.

Harm is defined as the ill treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is *significant* is determined by his/her health and development as to that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.

- **Emotional Abuse**

The severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a young person caused by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming, over-harsh disciplinary measures or exposure to violence.

The threshold of *significant harm* is reached when abusive interactions become **typical** of the relationship.

- **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury that causes significant harm to a child that results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child. It occurs by allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child.

- **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others. In essence it is the abuse of children through sexual activity that they do not fully understand and to which they are unable to give informed consent. The sexual exploitation of children is an abuse.



THE PROCEDURES

If there is indisputable evidence that an individual has abused a child the matter must be reported directly, and immediately, to the Gardaí.

1. If a member of Irish Water Safety, receives an allegation, or has a suspicion, that a child is being abused by member of the class, Irish Water Safety personnel or family member, the instructor or trainee instructor should, in the first instance, report the matter to another instructor, normally the deck manager. In this instance the report will be verbal.
2. The instructor and deck manager must advise the Children's Liaison Officer. In future, a Children's Liaison Officer will be an officer of the Area Committee.
3. It is important that the suspicions or allegations be recorded carefully by the C.L.O.
4. This type of discussion would most likely happen in cases where no specific allegation of child abuse has been made but the concern is based on emotional, behavioural and/or physical indications of a particular child.
5. In cases where an allegation has been made the matter must be reported immediately to the relevant authorities i.e. the designated officer of the Health Board or An Garda Síochána.
6. It is essential that at all times the matter be treated in the strictest confidence and not discussed except among the parties mentioned above.
7. It is not the responsibility of anyone mentioned in No. 2 above to make enquiries of parents and in some cases it could be counter-productive to do so. The role of personnel mentioned in No.2 above is limited and does not include taking over the role of the Health Board.
8. When matters regarding the safety of other children arise in a sporting context it will be necessary for someone in a position of authority to be informed of the allegations made so that suspension of the person from activities that involve children may be carried out until the conclusion of an investigation by the statutory authorities. Irish Water Safety has policy and procedures in place regarding suspension for alleged misconduct.
9. The Chief Executive of I.W.S. should be informed and briefed by the officers of the Area Committee and consulted at all times.



10. Suspension should not be the responsibility of a single person, rather, an emergency meeting of the officers of the Area Committee, the CEO, and the National CLO should be convened within three days and they make a recommendation on suspension of the individual. Should a meeting not be convened within three days then the CLO must fully report the matter to the CEO. The report shall set out all matters pertaining to the allegation or suspicion including, but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the time and place of the alleged incident(s), the name of the child alleged to be involved, the name of the member or other person alleged to be involved, the nature of the conduct suspected or complained of, and the recommendation regarding suspension.
11. In the case of a suspension, the CEO should formally notify the person being suspended, in writing.
12. The person against whom allegations have been made should, in the same letter, be invited to meet the officers of the Area Committee, the CEO, and the National CLO as soon as possible. The timing of this discussion may be a matter to be decided upon in consultation with the Statutory Authorities.
13. The person against whom the allegation has been made should be informed that this is not an accusation, and the procedures being undertaken are in accordance with statutory guidelines. The person should be assured that within the organisation all information would be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner.
14. The person should be made aware generally of the nature of any allegation made against them and of any allegation being made known to the Statutory Authorities.
15. The person should be afforded the opportunity to present a formal response to the allegations to senior personnel in the organisation (the CEO, Chairman, and one council member of the person's choosing) and the response should be reported to the Health Board if the person so desires.
16. In the case of an allegation of child sexual abuse, in the interest of confidentiality and child protection, it will be necessary to withhold the name of the child and precise details of the abuse.
17. Sec 4.7 of the Rules and Regulations of Area Water Safety Committees shall govern termination of membership.



From this point on, only the Statutory Authorities should deal with the matter.



Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998

This act came into operation on 23rd. January 1999. The main provisions of the act are:

- The provision of immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to designated officers of the health boards or the Gardaí.
- The creation of a new offence of false reporting of child abuse where a person makes a report "knowing that statement to be false"
- "A person shall not be liable in damages in respect of the communication, whether in writing or otherwise, by him or her to an appropriate person of his or her opinion that
 1. a child has been or is being assaulted, ill-treated, neglected or sexually abused, or
 2. a child's health, development or welfare has been or is being avoidably impaired or neglected,

unless it is proved that he or she has not acted reasonably and in good faith in forming that opinion and communicating it to the appropriate person



Immediate response to a child reporting any form of abuse

1. It is important to deal with any allegation of abuse in a sensitive and competent way through listening to, and facilitating the child to tell about the problem, rather than interview the child about details of what has happened.
2. It is important to stay calm and not show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying. Listen compassionately and take what the child is saying seriously.
3. The experience of telling should be a positive one so that the child will not mind talking to those involved in the investigation.
4. No judgmental statement should be made about the person against whom the allegation is made.
5. The child should be reassured that he/she was right to tell and that he/she will be helped. However no false promises or guarantees of confidentiality should be made.
6. The child should not be questioned unless the nature of what he/she is saying is unclear. Leading questions should be avoided. Open, non-specific questions should be used.
7. The child should be given an indication of what should happen next, such as informing parents and reporting to statutory authority.
8. A detailed account of any discussion regarding alleged or suspected abuse should be written as soon as possible after it has taken place.
9. A detailed account of the steps taken must, also, be kept.

Common Difficulties in dealing with Child Abuse

Dealing with child abuse is rarely straightforward. Many complications can arise including the following:

- Disclosure is made then withdrawn
- A disclosure is made and secrecy is expected
- A young person may threaten suicide if the report is to be passed on
- The young person will often seek to protect his/her abuser

Despite these, and other complications that may arise, the member should always follow the procedures and the following code of good practice.



Code of Good Practice For Irish Water Safety Personnel

- Maintain the highest standard of personal behaviour.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every human being.
- Be responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with participants.
- Realise that in certain situations the participant(s) or others could misinterpret friendly actions.
- Another adult should be involved in any demonstrations that require physical contact.
- Members should never allow themselves to be in a one to one situation with a participant(s) nor should a member run a class on their own.
- Ideally male and female members should be present at classes.
- Members should be discouraged from being alone in their cars with participant(s).
- In the case of overnight stays:
 1. written permission should be received from parents/guardians
 2. adults should not share rooms with children
 3. adequate adult:child ratios should be observed
 4. children should not share beds
 5. members are in loco parentis and supervision of the participants is vitally important.



Children's Liaison Officers

Functions:

- To promote awareness of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice within the organisation and particularly among the young people involved. This would be best done by the production of information leaflets etc. and by the facilitation of regular information meetings.
- To influence the policy and practice within the organisation to ensure that all policy and decisions take account of the young people's needs.
- To facilitate communication within the organisation.
- To provide an accessible resource for young people to express their concerns, views or worries regarding their involvement in the organisation.
- To act as an advisory resource to the adults involved in the organisation on child protection issues ensuring that statutory guidelines and procedures are followed.
- To communicate to members the Procedures for Reports or Accusations of Child Abuse drawn up by the organisation.
- To accurately, and immediately, record in the Children's Liaison Record Book the report or suspicion following the reporting of same to him/her and notify the officers of the Area Committee and the CEO.
- To attend the meeting of the officers and make his/her report.
- To be confidential regarding any reports received and to discuss the matter with no one apart from those laid down in the procedures.
- To be a member of the committee.
- To return the Children's Liaison Record Book to headquarters if there is a change of personnel in the C.L.O. position. This occurs when there are entries in the book.



Training

The Children's Liaison Officer should receive training in the following areas:

- The Code of Ethics and Good Practice
- Child protection procedures.
- Basic understanding of children's development.
- Communicating effectively with children and young people.
- Being accessible to, and approachable by, children.

This training should be available to the person through relevant agencies ensuring a quality input and a measure of effectiveness. This training should involve an assessment and evaluative component ensuring that only those suitable to be Children's Liaison Officers would be asked to undertake this function.

Each organisation should have in place a National Children's Liaison Officer who is available to all other CLO's for consultation, direction and training. This may have to be a paid position even in voluntary organisations.

Children's Liaison Officers have no role in the investigation or validation of child protection concerns within the organisation and would have no counselling or therapeutic role.



