

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING

Standard Operating Procedures

GS/SOP/27/11/2025: Version 3

Addendum and Amendments to the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

1) Roles and Responsibilities of Staff delegated:

Supervisor

- Manages the overall flow of children to and from the pool and changing areas.
- Remains outside the changing rooms as the central point of contact and ensures this protocol is followed at all times.
- Does not enter changing rooms for assistance.
- Is the only staff member authorised to coordinate and oversee all mid-session restroom breaks.

Swim Coaches (Female): Are the primary staff members permitted to enter the female changing room to provide assistance before and after the session in addition to the presence of a second adult.

Swim Coaches (Male): Are the primary staff members permitted to enter the male changing room to provide assistance before and after the session in addition to the presence of a second adult.

Cross-Gender Assistance Rule: Under no circumstances is a male coach to enter the female changing room or restroom, or a female coach to enter the male changing room or restroom. The only exception is in case of a verifiable medical emergency, where another staff member must be alerted first.

2) Training and Acknowledgement

- All staff must receive training on this addendum within 48 hours of deployment and sign an **acknowledgement form confirming they understand and will comply.**
- Refresher training will occur quarterly, before camps and at the start of the academic season

3) Prohibited Practices

- No photography, filming, or mobile phone use in changing rooms, restrooms, or poolside areas except on academy-approved devices with parental consent.
- No physical contact beyond the specific tasks listed on the signed consent form.
- No discussion of changing/restroom matters with children beyond what is necessary for the task.

4) Protocol for Mid-Session Restroom Breaks

This procedure must be followed any time a child needs to use the restroom during the swim session.

1. Initiation: The child informs a coach. The coach immediately signals the Supervisor.
2. Escort: The Supervisor walks the child to the restrooms. Coaches remain with the rest of the group in the pool.
3. Safety Check: The Supervisor will verbally announce their entry and check that the restroom is empty of other people before the child enters.
4. Waiting Position: The Supervisor will wait outside the restroom door, in the aisle, ensuring they are visible but maintaining the child's privacy. The Supervisor must not enter the restroom unless the child calls for help or there is a clear emergency.

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5. Return: Once the child exits, the Supervisor will escort them back to the poolside and hand them back over to the coach.

5) Contingency Plan for Single-Coach Supervision

When a second coach of the same gender is not present, the principles of Transparency and Supervisor Oversight is applied.

Procedure:

1. **Supervisor Notification:** The single coach must inform the Supervisor before entering the changing room.
2. **Open-Door Mandate:** The main door to the changing room must remain propped open (without entering) by the supervisor to eliminate isolation and allow for auditory monitoring.

3. Documentation of exceptions

- * Medical, injury,
- * Supporting a child without pre-formal approval
- * Missing parent (for changing support)
- * Late parent pick up
 - Must be documented by the Supervisor and shared with management and the school safeguarding contact.

Parent communications

- If the Supervisor receives any-one-off written approval from a parent (email or WhatsApp) relating to assistance, this communication must be saved and attached to the incident record.

6) Incident Reporting and Escalation

1. All incidents, deviations from protocol, or concerns must be recorded on the standard Gulfstar Incident Form within 1 hour.
2. Supervisor submits the form to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and school safeguarding contact by end of session.
3. Serious incidents (injury, non-consensual assistance, child distress) require immediate verbal and written notification to management and school leadership.
4. Records are maintained securely for minimum 5 years or as required by UAE regulations.

7) Monitoring and Compliance

1. Management will conduct unannounced spot checks of changing room/poolside practices on regular basis.
2. Non-compliance results in immediate suspension pending investigation and disciplinary action.

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3. Quarterly audits of consent forms, incident logs, and training records.

8) Written Consent for Coach Assistance

- A "Permission for Changing Assistance" form must be completed and signed by the parent/legal guardian at the time of registration for any child who may require physical assistance in the changing room.
- This form will outline the specific protocols coaches follow and will specify the tasks for which assistance is permitted (e.g., tying shoes, fastening buttons).
- No coach is permitted to provide physical assistance to a child in the changing room without this written consent form on file. Past verbal permissions are invalid and must not be relied upon.

a. Parental Presence as an Alternative

- Parents/guardians are informed that they are welcome to come to the school to assist their own child in a washroom (assigned by the school) before and after the swimming lesson.

If a child requires assistance and:

- There is no written consent form on file, or
- The child refuses assistance from the coach on the day,

then the following steps must be followed:

1) The Supervisor will immediately contact the parent to inform them that their child requires assistance.

2) The parent will be given the option to:

- a) Come to the facility immediately to assist their child, ensuring they can participate in the lesson.
- b) Give temporary, written (whatsapp or email) consent for that specific instance, which will be documented by the Supervisor. (This is for minor, one-off assistance and does not replace the written form).

3) No consent / parent unavailable

- a) If the parent cannot attend and does not provide consent, the child will not participate in the swimming lesson on that day, solely for safety and safeguarding reasons.
- b) This must be documented and shared with management and the school.

9. Physical Contact and Intimate Care

- Coaches and staff must obtain explicit verbal consent from the child before any physical touching or assistance with changing clothes. For example, state clearly: "I need to help you adjust your trousers to get ready for the activity. Is that okay with you?" and wait for affirmative agreement.
- Never touch a child or assist with clothing changes without this consent, even if a parent has verbally requested help; all parental requests for such assistance must be documented in writing and approved by the safeguarding lead in advance.

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- If the child refuses or appears uncomfortable, immediately stop, respect their decision, and notify a supervisor or safeguarding lead without proceeding. Document the interaction, including the child's response, for records

10. Hierarchy/Reporting structure

- 1) On-site Coordinator / Supervisor at School
 - a) First point of contact
 - b) Records and reports the concern
 - 2) Company Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
 - a) Receives all safeguarding concerns
 - b) Decides on risk level and referrals
 - c) Leads safeguarding actions
 - 3) HR Department
 - a) Notified when staff conduct or employment issues are involved
 - b) Manages disciplinary or HR-related actions
 - 4) Senior Management
 - a) Informed of serious incidents
 - b) Oversees organisational response and high-level decisions
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For the Coach:

“I hereby acknowledge that I have received, read, and understood the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and I accept and agree to comply with the guidelines contained therein.”

Name of the Coach/Supervisor: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____