

Missing or Lost Child Procedure

Guildford City Swimming Club — in association with Swim England's Wavepower

It is hoped that no child will ever go missing from a Guildford City Swimming Club (GCSC) activity, and it is worth remembering that most children are found within a few minutes of being noticed missing. This procedure sets out what to do if it happens, in line with Swim England's Wavepower policy.

When this procedure applies

This procedure applies if a child leaves a training session, competition, or other Club activity, and their whereabouts become unknown to the coach, teacher or person responsible for the session — where it is not confirmed that a parent/carer is aware of their location. It is separate from GCSC's Late Collection of Swimmers Policy, which covers a child who has not yet been picked up at the end of a session.

Immediate actions

1. Ensure all other children present are properly supervised while the search is organised — do not leave a group unsupervised to search for one child.
2. Nominate one person to coordinate the search and keep track of information as it comes in.
3. If a parent/carer is present at the venue, inform them immediately. If not, telephone them straight away and explain the situation calmly.
4. Where age-appropriate, try to contact the child directly via their own mobile phone.
5. Divide the available responsible adults to search specific areas systematically — changing rooms, toilets, poolside, reception, car park, and any other space the child could have reached.
6. Record key details that the police would need: the child's physical description (height, build, hair and eye colour), what they were wearing, and where and when they were last seen.

If the search is unsuccessful

Report the concern to the police no later than 30 minutes after the child's disappearance is first noticed — even if the search is still ongoing.

If there is any reason to believe the child is in immediate danger, call 999 straight away rather than waiting.

- Follow any guidance the police give about further action, including whether and how to continue the search.
- Keep the coordinating person informed of all search updates, so information reaching the police is accurate and consistent.

When the child is found

- Immediately inform everyone involved — parents/carers, searchers, and the police if they have already been contacted.
- Check the child is safe and well, and reassure them; avoid interrogating them about what happened in the moment.
- Let the parent/carer know what happened in a calm, factual way as soon as possible.

After the incident

- Refer the matter to the Club Welfare Officer as soon as possible, who will consider whether it should also be referred to Swim England's Safeguarding and Welfare Team.
- Record the incident, including timings and actions taken, in the Club's Accident/Incident record.
- Review what happened with the Welfare Officer and relevant coaches, and consider whether any change to supervision, headcounts, or venue procedures would help prevent a repeat.

Prevention

- Take a register or headcount of swimmers at the start and end of every session.
- Agree clear collection points and handover procedures with parents/carers (see GCSC's Late Collection of Swimmers Policy).
- Ensure coaches and helpers are briefed on venue layout, including exits, before each session at an unfamiliar venue.
- Keep an up-to-date emergency contact number for every swimmer, accessible to whoever is running the session.

Related policies

- [GCSC Welfare and Safeguarding](#)
- [GCSC Late Collection of Swimmers Policy](#)
- [Swim England Wavepower](#)

Contact

- [GCSC Welfare Officer — welfare.officer@gcsc.co.uk](mailto:welfare.officer@gcsc.co.uk)

This procedure should be read alongside Swim England's Wavepower policy and GCSC's wider Welfare and Safeguarding procedures. It will be reviewed annually, or sooner if Wavepower guidance changes.