

Changing Room Policy

(September 2026)

1. Purpose of This Policy

Swim England has provided updated guidance to clarify the responsibilities clubs hold for children and young people (under 18) in changing rooms before, during and after training sessions, events or competitions.

Under Swim England's duty of care and safeguarding framework, **Ripley Rascals Swimming Club** (hereinafter called "The Club") has a responsibility to promote the wellbeing and safety of all children using changing facilities.

This responsibility **does not** replace the role of Parents/Guardians, but recognises that they are often not present in the pool complex during training. For this reason, The Club must clearly communicate when Parents/Guardians are required to remain at the pool — for example:

- Young children who need help changing.
- Children with disabilities who require additional support that the Club cannot provide.

2. Responsibility During Club Sessions

Swim England's position is that while a child is being taught or coached, they remain under the duty of care of the Coach or Teacher delivering the session.

- If a Member leaves the pool area, the Coach/Teacher must be aware.
- If the Member does not return promptly, or appears upset when leaving, the Coach/Teacher should ask a suitable adult to check on them.
- Best practice is for **two people** to check — this may include a Senior Club Member or a Parent/Guardian

Changing Room Policy continued

Responding to Incidents in Changing Rooms

If The Club receives a complaint about an incident in the changing rooms involving a Member:

- The Welfare Officer must be informed immediately.
- The Club must act on the concern in line with Wavepower Version 2.1 (May 2025) safeguarding procedures.
- If the incident involves potential risk to children, pool management should also be notified.
- If the incident involves someone not associated with the Club, pool management must be informed and consideration given to contacting statutory agencies.

3. Swim England Guidance on Changing Facilities

Swim England continues to work with the CPSU, Sport England, facility providers and the Swim England Facilities Team to encourage pool operators to provide **separate changing areas for school-age children**, even within mixed changing villages.

4. Information for Parents/Guardians

The Club will ensure Parents/Guardians are aware of the following:

- Changing facilities may be shared with members of the public.**
- The type of changing facility being used** (single-sex or mixed changing village).
- Member behaviour in changing rooms forms part of the Club Code of Conduct.**
 - Adult (Masters) swimmers should use separate areas where possible.
 - Where this is not possible, adults must change appropriately and be mindful of children present.
- Parents/Guardians should **not be alone** in changing rooms with children unless:
 - Their child is young enough to require assistance (usually age 7–8, depending on pool policy), or
 - Their child requires specific additional support. In these cases, the assisting adult should be **the same gender** as the child unless family or mixed changing facilities are available.

Changing Room Policy continued

- v. When The Club hosts events involving other clubs or schools, Parents/Guardians and competitors will be informed whether changing facilities will be open to the public during the event.

5. Supervision and Safety in Changing Rooms

Swim England **does not** advise adults to supervise inside changing rooms, as this places both adults and children at risk of harm or allegation.

However, clubs **may** position an officer or poolside helper **outside** changing room entrances so children can call for assistance if needed. This approach has proven effective when children report bullying or behaviour concerns occurring in changing rooms.

6. Responsibility After a Session

Swim England states that clubs have a reasonable duty of care to be aware that Junior Members have been collected at the end of a session.

- A 17-year-old may reasonably leave independently.
- A 12-year-old should not be left unsupervised.
-

If changing rooms are shared with public swimmers, it is **not reasonable** to expect the Club to search changing areas for uncollected children.

Best Practice

- Junior Members and Parents/Guardians must be informed that if a child is not collected, they should notify the Welfare Officer, Coach or designated Club official.
- The designated adult must ensure the child is supervised appropriately until collected or alternative arrangements are confirmed.

If a Parent/Guardian fails to collect a child, The Club will follow Swim England's **Late Collection of Children Policy**.

Members may contact the Ripley Rascals Swimming Club Welfare Officer in confidence to discuss any concerns.

Ripley Rascals Swimming Club Welfare Officer :

Telephone: 01773 252633

Email: welfare@ripleyrascals.org.uk