

Greenwich Royals Swimming Club: Policy and procedures for managing poor behaviour



OBJECTIVES

Greenwich Royals Swimming Club (GRSC) is committed to a club environment in which all members participating in its activities have a safe and positive experience, and that quality teaching and training can take place. This document outlines the behaviour we expect from all members and the disciplinary procedures which will be used to protect this aim.

1 Introduction and general principles

1.1 All members of GRSC have:

- the right to expect respect from others
- a responsibility to respect others
- the right to train and compete in a safe non-threatening environment
- a responsibility for the safety and well-being of self and others
- the responsibility not to disrupt the training of others

By following these principles, swimmers will learn to accept responsibility for their actions and know the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

1.2 In order to ensure consistency of approach to discipline, the Codes of conduct are made available to all swimmers and their parents. It is a matter of policy that where the club's Codes of Conduct are not adhered, appropriate steps are taken to change behaviours or, if necessary, sanctions are applied to protect members.

1.3 GRSC is committed to enforcing its Codes of Conduct¹ and policies. This document aims to guide the executive committee and inform members of the disciplinary process underpinned by the Swim England's Wavepower: Child safeguarding policy and procedures for clubs² (Wavepower).

1.4 The behaviour rules and procedures are designed to be non-discriminatory and are to be applied irrespective of sex, racial group, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age or any other bias.

¹ www.grsc.co.uk

² <https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/wavepower-child-safeguarding-for-clubs/>

- 1.5 The club will investigate behaviour-related issues in accordance with its constitution and with reference to the Swim England Judicial Rules and the guidance set-out in Wavepower. This may involve swimmers and parents/ guardians meeting with representatives of the club to discuss the issue.
- 1.6 All matters relating to disciplinary action will be handled as speedily as possible.
- 1.7 It is expected that most matters will be dealt with on poolside or at the point of incidence informally at the time of the event.
- 1.8 A person wishing to make a complaint about inappropriate conduct should normally do so within 30 days of the incident.
- 1.9 The Committee has the power to expel a member when, in its opinion, it would not be in the best interests of the club for the individual to remain a member. In these instances, the procedure followed would be as laid down in the Swim England Handbook, Judicial Regulations³. No member will be dismissed or suspended from the club for a first breach of conduct except in the case of gross misconduct.
- 1.10 Club members will have a right of appeal against any formal disciplinary decision.

2 Disciplinary incidents/ misconduct

- 2.1 Coaches and teachers are responsible for the management of swimmer's behaviour within their training sessions in the pool and their behaviour on poolside during sessions. They may be assisted by volunteers and chaperones.
- 2.2 The following is not an exhaustive list but are examples of behaviours which are considered to be acts of misconduct. In serious cases they may be deemed to be acts of gross misconduct, resulting in instant suspension/ termination of membership:
- Bullying Club Members physically, verbally or in written communication or social media or gaming platforms, either directly or indirectly.
 - Taking & sharing inappropriate images.
 - Undermining coaching and teaching staff either orally or in written communication either directly or indirectly.
 - Acting in conflict with GRSC Codes of Conduct, rules and procedures.
 - Physical or verbal abuse or refusal to adhere to lawful instructions.
 - Gross breach of safety requirements likely to endanger other people or yourself or to cause damage to Club/hired property.

³ <https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/swim-england-handbook/>

- Theft, fraud, or other criminal acts such as physical assault, causing deliberate damage to Club/ hired property, possession or use of a weapon, substance abuse etc.
- Gross negligence which causes unacceptable loss, damage or injury.
- Showing a lack of respect towards leisure centre operatives, coaches, teachers, officials, swimmers, team mates, whether members of GRSC or other swimming clubs;
- Persistent verbal abuse or use of inappropriate language (including swearing)
- Persistent disruption of swimming session(s)

3 Disciplinary approach

- 3.1 Involvement in one or more of the above incidents can lead to a fixed-term exclusion from training or permanent exclusion from the club.
- 3.2 In the event of serious misconduct leading to a fixed-term exclusion from training, on re-admittance the GRSC executive committee would usually ensure a behaviour contract with the swimmer is in place. It may be that a behaviour contract is also agreed following repeating incidents and prior to any training suspension. An example of such a contract can be found at Appendix A.
- 3.3 The club reserves the right to withdraw any swimmer on fixed term exclusion or during investigation of a serious misconduct case from, for example galas, swim camps, trips etc..

4 Disciplinary stages and sanctions

- 4.1 Depending on the circumstances, the typical stages of disciplinary action and sanctions may include:

Stage 01 – Standard coaching/ teaching intervention

- a) First request to modify behaviour from a coach, teacher or team manager which if repeated may lead to parents/ guardians being informed.
- b) Swimmer is asked to sit out of session or part of session to reflect on poor behaviour for a period of time and parents/ guardians may be contacted to collect the swimmer.
- c) A second warning will be given to the swimmer with parents/ guardians present. The swimmer will be asked to make changes to their behaviour going forward.

- d) The respective coach/ teacher may inform or consult a Club Welfare Officer, the Club Secretary and/ or the Head Coach if considered appropriate for the situation or behaviour that has taken place.
- e) If the coach/ teacher considers the misbehaviour to be serious, they should report the matter as a Stage 03 issue or in the case of gross misconduct as a Stage 04 issue.
- f) Squad Coaches may use their discretion and judgement to initiate and repeat Stage 01 on any number of occasions prior to moving to Stage 02, which should always be the next step once it is clear that standard coaching interventions or interactions are not resolving the matter.

Stage 02 – Verbal warning

- a) Where a swimmer's behaviour has not been resolved through coach/ teacher intervention, the issue will be referred to an appropriate official e.g. a Club Welfare Officer, an Executive Officer and/ or the Head Coach.
- b) Upon investigation, the official(s) may take such action as is necessary. They may call a meeting with the swimmer, parents/guardians and coach, and may issue a verbal warning. A note will be added to the swimmer's membership file and copied to them in writing, and may be referred to should there be any further incidents.
- c) To help the swimmer resolve their problems a Swimmer Behaviour Contract may be issued.

Stage 03 – Written warning

- a) In the case of more serious incidents, or if a further offence occurs (whether of a similar or different nature) or there is a breach of a Swimmers Behaviour Contract a written warning will be issued to the swimmer and parents/guardians by the Club Chair.
- b) This will give reasons for the warning, the improvement required and the date when the warning expires it will warn that action under Stage 04 of the disciplinary procedure will be considered if there is no satisfactory improvement or further acts of misconduct occur.
- c) A note will be added to the swimmer's membership file and copied to them in writing, and may be referred to should there be any further incidents.

Stage 04 – Suspension or termination of membership

- a) If conduct is still unsatisfactory and the member still fails to reach the prescribed standards despite receiving a written warning, or if the member

has committed an act of gross misconduct, suspension or termination of a swimmer's membership of GRSC may occur.

- b) Suspension or termination of membership may also result from breaches of any of GRSC Codes of conduct, rules and procedures and those of Swim England.
- c) A swimmer may be temporarily suspended for a length of time agreed by an Executive Officer, after referral to the Committee, the Club Welfare Officer(s) and the Head Coach. An email will be sent to the swimmer's parents/ guardians explaining why the swimmer has been suspended and detailing the period of time they are not to attend any club activities.
- d) A note will be added to the swimmer's membership file and copied to them in writing, and may be referred to should there be any further incidents.
- e) Termination of club membership will only be considered by following Section 6 of the Club's Constitution.

5 Investigating complaints

5.1 GRSC will investigate behaviour related issues in accordance with its Constitution and by following the guidance set out in Wavepower.

5.2 The club will aim to:

- Appoint someone to lead the investigation, for example a Committee Member, a Welfare Officer, the Head Coach or Lead Teacher etc.
- Meet the complainant in person and take written notes of the meeting.
- Set up a meeting to discuss the incident with the members involved, ensuring parents/ guardians are present if the swimmer(s) to be spoken to are under 18 years.
- Where required, ask any witnesses to provide verbal testimony and/ or written statements (their parents/ guardians to be asked for consent to approach them if under 18 years).
- Consider and where appropriate, promote reconciliation/ mediation or restorative steps.
- Follow the same protocol as above with the swimmer who is the subject of the complaint.
- Conclude the investigation as soon as is reasonably possible ensuring fairness to both parties and keeping them informed of what is happening throughout.

- Keep records on any incident, including any outcomes or disciplinary action taken.

5.3 Instances of inappropriate behaviour will be subject to one or more sanctions across the range of those available. Sanctions will be determined by the severity and persistence of the inappropriate behaviour, and the circumstances.

6 Appeal process

6.1 At all stages the swimmer can appeal against the above processes and are entitled to representation which would usually be a parent or guardian, however, they can also request assistance or the presence of one of our Welfare Officers.

6.2 If there is an appeal, the swimmer will not be allowed back to training sessions without the agreement of the responsible coach (unless the decision is overturned by the Executive Officers). In addition, no refunds will be made for lost sessions (even if the suspension is overturned).

6.3 Under Regulation 102 of Swim England judicial regulations, if a member is dissatisfied with the application of the above policy and with regards to the sanctions issued, they will be advised that they have a right to make a complaint to Swim England for their consideration.

7 Parent/ guardian behaviour

7.1 Breaches of the club's Code of Conduct for Parents and Guardians will normally be reported to an Executive Officer, a Committee Member or a Welfare Officer and will be dealt with in accordance with Swim England guidelines.

7.2 Sanctions for breaches may include a verbal or written warning or suspension from attending Club activities. The Club also has the right under its constitution to suspend or expel a swimmer for any breaches of the codes by their parents/ guardians.

Appendix A – example of GRSC Swimmer’s Behaviour Contract

Greenwich Royals Swimming Club – Swimmers Behaviour Contract

Contract between:

Greenwich Royals Swimming Club and [name of member]

This contract has been drawn up to address incidents of poor behaviour by [name of member] at Greenwich Royals Swimming Club.

[name of member] will abide by Greenwich Royals Swimming Club’s Codes of Conduct for swimmers, associated rules and procedures. Specifically [name of member] will not:

1. *(Details of specific actions about which the concerns have been raised)*
2. *(Details of specific actions about which the concerns have been raised)*

[name of parents] will be required to:

1. *(Details of what is required of the parents)*
2. *(Details of what is required of the parents)*

If the member is reported to have breached this contract or to have behaved in a way that would be a serious breach of the Codes of Conduct the following steps should be taken:

1. The parents will be informed immediately.
2. A written warning will be issued to the swimmer and parents/ guardians by the Club’s Chair. This will give reasons for the warning, the improvement required and the date when the warning expires. It will warn that further action will be considered if there is no satisfactory improvement or further acts of misconduct occur and that may result in the swimmer being suspended or membership terminated. It will also advise of rights of appeal.

Swimmer – name, signature & date

Parent – name, signature & date

Coach – name, signature & date