



**Portsmouth Northsea Swimming Club  
Swimmers Disciplinary Procedure V2  
October 2022**

**Objective**

Portsmouth Northsea Swimming Club (PNSC) is committed to enforcing the relevant Club Codes of Conduct relating to its members. If a breach is considered to have been made by a member then this document is designed to guide the PNSC Coaching and Committee Teams and inform parents/guardians of the discipline process. The primary objective is to encourage members to comply with the Code of Conduct and fulfil their obligations as set out in the club's policies.

**Four Stages of Disciplinary Action:**

<p><b>Stage 0</b> <b>Normal Coaching Intervention/Interaction: verbal warning</b></p>
<p><b>Stage 1</b> <b>Formal Verbal Warning/ Increased level of action</b></p>
<p><b>Stage 2</b> <b>Written Warning</b></p>
<p><b>Stage 3</b> <b>Suspension or Termination of Membership</b></p>

## **Stage 0 – Normal Coaching Intervention/Interaction: verbal warning**

It is anticipated that most coaching, training and behavioural issues can be appropriately, effectively and quickly dealt with through formal and informal intervention, interaction and discussion by the Coach with those parties responsible. This will always be the first action taken by the Coach and whilst it does not require observation or verification by any other persons, the respective Coach may inform or consult with the parents / guardians / Welfare Officer / Committee / Coach and Head Coach if considered appropriate for the situation or behaviour that has taken place.

Coaches may use their discretion and judgement to initiate and repeat Stage 0 on any number of occasions prior to moving to Stage 1, which should always be the next step once it is clear that normal Coaching interventions or interactions are not resolving the matter.

### **Description of causes:**

An isolated incident or first offence. Examples:

- Disruption of a training set, this includes both pool based and land based sessions: chatting, messing around, distracting behaviour to other swimmers, not listening.
- Failure to follow instructions correctly.
- Repeated inappropriate use of language not directed at anyone.
- Lateness: swimmers are expected to arrive 5 minutes before the start of the session. Therefore, lateness is classified as any time after the official session start time.
- Going for toilet breaks without Coach's approval, or unnecessary delays in coming back to training following a toilet break.

### **Coach's Action:**

1. Initial action: in the first instance the Coach should give a verbal warning before taking further action. In the majority of cases this should be given before any additional actions, but this will be at the discretion of the Coach.
2. Below are examples of appropriate further actions that the Coach may use at their discretion. These actions should not be humiliating to the individual. The Coach will also clearly explain what the penalty is for. Examples:
  - Time out (5-10 minutes on side of pool). If a swimmer is frustrated/ angry then they should be removed to a safe area to cool off.
  - Repeating part of the training set not performed well.
  - Change the type of work the swimmer is doing in the pool.
  - Moving the swimmer into another lane or another area for land based sessions.
  - Exclude a swimmer from the session where the incident takes place.
  - Invite the swimmer to a 'Performance Review' meeting with the Coach and the parents / guardians should they deem it necessary. The Head Coach may attend these meetings if appropriate.
3. The Coach will make a record of the incident and actions in his/her diary. All incidents are held on record for four weeks.
4. The Coach will inform the swimmer that a repeat offence will result in being removed from the remainder of that session and that their parents will be contacted with a standard email copying the Welfare Officer.
5. The Coach may ask for a Performance Review with the parents/ carers.

## *Management of Lateness*

If lateness is down to the parents or traffic it will be recorded (or not previously agreed by the Coach) but no action taken. Swimmers are encouraged to talk to the Coach at arrival before entering the water. If lateness is considered by the Coach to cause disruption to the rest of the squad, the swimmer may be asked to delay entering the session or sit out of the session under the Coach's supervision. More than 6 late arrivals for any session within a consecutive four-week period, will result in parents being contacted by the Coach

### **Stage 1 - Formal Verbal Warning/ Increased level of action**

**Description of causes:** either a repeat offence following a previous Stage 0 verbal warning or a second Stage 0 offence during the same session.

Or: a direct Stage 1 offence, examples of which include:

- Disrespectful conduct to the Coach or other swimmers.
- Inappropriate language e.g. swearing at other swimmers and Coaches.
- Deliberate disruption.
- Wilful failure to follow training set instructions.
- PNSC representation at open competitions: failure to notify team manager of withdrawal prior to the specified withdrawal time.
- Breach of the swimmers' code of conduct: if the offence reaches the threshold for Stage 1 or 2 offence it will be managed as such.

#### **Actions:**

1. The Coach will inform the swimmer to sit out for the remainder of the session including all pool and land based sessions that follow.
  - a. During pool based training set the swimmer is sent to get changed and must sit at poolside until the end of the session.
  - b. During land based training set the swimmer must sit out until the end of the session.
2. The Coach will inform the swimmer that failure to improve behaviour during the next four-week period will result in the possibility of a 2 session suspension.
3. The Coach will make diary notes of the actions.
4. The Coach will inform the Welfare Officer and Head Coach of misconduct.
5. The Coach in consultation with the Welfare Officer, they may call a meeting with the swimmer, parents / guardians, and coaches and issue a verbal warning (a standard warning email will be sent to the swimmer's parents). This notification will be entered into the swimmer's club membership file, copied to them in writing and may be referred to should there be any further incidents. To help the swimmer resolve their problems a Swimmer Behaviour Contract may be issued.

*Management of late arrival to a gala /failure to notify team managers of gala withdrawal:*

- If lateness is down to the parents it will be recorded but no action taken.
- If late withdrawal/non-attendance is due to the swimmer, the parents will be informed.
- If late withdrawal/non-attendance is considered by the Coach to cause disruption to the rest of the team, the swimmer may be withdrawn from the rest of the gala.
- Late withdrawn on 3 or more occasions within a season will be treated as a Stage 2 offence.

## **Stage 2 - Written Warning**

In the case of more serious incidents, or if a further offence occurs (whether of a similar or different nature) a written warning will be issued to the swimmer and parents / guardians by the Welfare Officer / as appropriate. This will give reasons for the warning, the improvement required and the date when the warning expires – it will warn that action under Stage 3 of the disciplinary procedure will be considered if there is no satisfactory improvement or further acts of misconduct occur and will advise of rights of appeal. Similar to Stage 1, a note will be entered into the swimmer's club membership file, copied to them in writing and may be referred to should there be any further incidents.

### **Description of causes:**

Either: 3 or more repeated Stage 0 offences in the same session

Or 2 or more Stage 1 offences within a four-week period

Or there may be some specific incidents or situations that warrant immediate Stage 2

review and bypass Stage 0 and 1 disciplinary procedures. See below.

- Failure to attend training if dropped off by parents (i.e hiding in changing area whilst training is taking place).
- Club representation – failure to behave in an appropriate manner: every member represents PNSC. It is important that in all situations swimmers behave accordingly, especially during swimming meets and swim camps. If a swimmer's behaviour is deemed disruptive or disrespectful and brings the club into disrepute, then the club will follow the below actions.
- Reported, non-sporting behaviour towards other club members (verbal and physical).
- Damage to property both public or personal: every member must respect the property of others and their surroundings.
- Physical contact with others which has caused distress but not performed with malicious intent.
- Attendance of any competition out with the PNSC Calendar unless agreed with the Coach prior to entry.
- Breaking of rules of the photography policy.

**Actions:**

1. The Coach will immediately exclude the swimmer from that training session:
  - a. During pool based training set the swimmer is sent to get changed and must sit at poolside until the end of the session.
  - b. During land based training set the swimmer must sit out until the end of the session.
2. The Coach will exclude the swimmer from all subsequent sessions and competitions until a meeting has been arranged with the Disciplinary Panel. Please note that the Head Coach has full authority over the population of training and if Stage 2 has been reached, access may be withdrawn to any or all (s) training sessions for the swimmer concerned.
3. The Coach will make diary notes of the actions.
4. The Coach will provide a written report to the Welfare Officer and Head Coach.
5. Following this meeting, a decision will be made by the Disciplinary Panel regarding the action to be taken. This may lead to suspension from training for a period of up to 5 days or an exclusion of an upcoming gala.
6. The Coach, along with the Welfare Officer, will inform the swimmer that they will receive a written warning stating that they will receive 3 months of probation following suspension/ exclusion.
7. The Director of Swimming & Committee will be informed.

**Stage 3 – Suspension or Termination of Membership:**

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 and/or termination of a swimmer's membership by PNSC may occur.

**Description of causes:**

- Repeat Stage 1 offences following a Stage 2 disciplinary action within the three month probation period).
- Serious breach of any of PNSC codes of conduct / policies, Promoters' conditions and those of Swim England.
- Gross misconduct (see Gross Misconduct section for examples, but not limited to).

**Actions:**

1. The Coach will immediately exclude the swimmer from that training session (as in Stages 1 and 2).
  - a. During pool based training set the swimmer is sent to get changed and must sit at poolside until the end of the session.

- b. During land based training set the swimmer must sit out until the end of the session.
2. The Coach will exclude the swimmer from all subsequent sessions and competitions until a meeting has been arranged with the Disciplinary Panel. Please note that the Head Coach has full authority over the population of training s and if Stage 3 has been reached, access may be withdrawn to any or all (s) training sessions for the swimmer concerned.
3. The Coach will make diary notes of the actions and inform the Disciplinary Panel with a written report.
4. The Coach will send a written report to the Disciplinary Panel, Head Coach and Welfare Officer for further action.
5. The Disciplinary Panel may deal with the incident immediately or meet to hear the evidence and decide upon actions to be taken. A Disciplinary Panel shall have the power to impose specific conditions of behaviour on the member under the guidance of the Swim England.
6. The Welfare Officer will contact Swim England for further advice.
7. The Welfare Officer will contact external agencies following the guidelines of Swim England's Welfare Handbook (Wavepower).
8. The Director of Swimming & Committee will be informed.
9. The decisions of the Disciplinary Panel will be communicated in writing. A meeting will be arranged with the Swimmers/ Parents as necessary.

Before termination of a swimmer's membership is made, a full investigation will be carried out.

Any appeal against termination of membership must be submitted to the Club Secretary within 14 days by formal letter. Upon receiving an appeal the Committee Team will organise an independent assessment of the case and report within 28 days unless there is good reason to extend the time frame.

## **Gross Misconduct**

The following 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 and may lead to instant suspension or termination of membership.

- Bullying Club Members physically, orally or in written communication or social media or gaming platforms, either directly or indirectly.
- Inappropriate image capturing.
- Undermining coaching and teaching staff either orally or in written communication either directly or indirectly.
- Acting in conflict with PNSC Codes of Conduct or any other policy documents.
- Physical or oral abuse or refusal to obey lawful instructions.
- Gross breach of safety requirements likely to endanger individuals or other people or to cause damage to Club/hired property.
- Smoking or vaping.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs or possession of illegal drugs.
- Theft, fraud, or other criminal acts.
- Physical assault or harassment.
- Causing deliberate damage to Club/hired property.

- Gross negligence which causes unacceptable loss, damage or injury.
- Sexual or racial harassment or discrimination of any kind.
- Harassment or discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.
- Showing a lack of respect towards Coaches, officials, swimmers, team mates or any other members of PNSC.

## **General Principles**

PNSC disciplinary procedures are based on the following principles:

- The disciplinary 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.
- All matters will be dealt with in accordance with the Club Constitution and Swim England law.
- 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.
- Any behaviour that is considered to be unacceptable by Coaching staff or team managers may lead to a 'behaviour contract' being issued.
- All matters relating to disciplinary action will be handled as speedily as possible.
- A person wishing to make a complaint about inappropriate conduct should normally do so at the time.
- Persistent or serious breaches of conduct will be reported to the Welfare Officer – preferably in writing.
- No member will be dismissed or suspended from the Club for a first breach of conduct except in the case of serious or gross misconduct.
- Club members will have a right of appeal against any formal disciplinary decision.

## **Information Governance**

All reports of any incidents from Stage 1 or above, from both Coaches and Disciplinary Panel, will be documented and logged by the Welfare Officer. Stage 0 offences will only be recorded in Coach diaries.

It is requested that all incidents should not be discussed by parents with other parents.

All incidents will be treated as confidential by the Coaches, Club Welfare Officer and Disciplinary Committee as outlined in Wavepower. Information will only be disclosed on 'a need to know basis'.