

Anti-Bullying Policy

(as seen in Wavewater 2020/23, Section 2.4, page 70-74)

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our Swimmers so they can learn to swim and train in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Reading Swimming Club. If bullying does occur, all Swimmers should be able to understand that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

We are a 'TELLING' club. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Welfare Officer, a Coach, Teacher or a Committee member.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, setting people up (e.g. threatening gestures, hiding floats/bags on poolside or in the changing room) and spreading rumours
- Physical: any non-accidental physical contact including hitting, kicking and pushing. Intimidating behaviour, theft or intentional damage of possessions.
- Racist: bullying based on ethnicity, skin colour, language, religious or cultural practices
- Sexual: unwelcome sexual advances and inappropriate sexual comments and innuendo
- Homophobic and transphobic: bullying based on sexuality or gender identity
- Disablist: bullying based on those with special educational needs and disabilities
- Verbal: name-calling, persistent teasing, mocking, taunting and threats
- Cyber: the use of all digital technologies and communications to bully a person or group (e.g. internet, email, internet chat rooms, mobiles, SMS/MMS messaging and all social networking platforms)
- Discriminative: bullying based on any perceived weakness or difference (e.g. factors surrounding the way someone looks, the clothes they wear, family or social situations, hobbies and interests)

Why is it important to respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

Swimmers who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Objectives of this Policy

- All Committee members, Teachers and Coaches, Swimmers and Parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All Committee members, Teachers and Coaches should know what the Club policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All Swimmers and Parents should know what the Club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- Bullying will not be tolerated. Swimmers and Parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Signs and Symptoms

A Member may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a Member:

- Is frightened of walking to or from swimming sessions.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Feels ill at training times and does not want to go.
- Becomes withdrawn anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Training and competition level drop off.
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Comes home with clothes torn or swimming equipment damaged/lost.
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to the Welfare Officer, a Coach, Teacher or a Committee Member.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by that person and referred to the Welfare Officer if they are not already aware.
3. In serious cases, Parents should be informed and will be asked to come into a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. If bullying is found to have occurred on the 'balance of probabilities' then appropriate action will be taken including an attempt to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour and a [Behaviour Contract](#) drawn up between the parties involved.

Outcomes

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise.
2. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
3. After the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

Everyone within the club has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying and commit to ensuring everyone understands and adheres to the [Code of Ethics](#) and [Code of Conduct](#).

- Observe the club rules
- Raise awareness and promote the Anti-Bullying Policy
- Encourage the club captains to foster friendships and promote positive relationships within the club in order to prevent bullying behaviour
- Sign a behaviour contract

Help Organisations

- **Swimline** - 0808 100 4001
- [Child Line](#) - 0800 1111
- [NSPCC Helpline](#) - 0808 800 5000
- [KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline](#) - 08451 205 204 (Mon-Fri 10am-4pm)
- [Child Power Leaflet](#)
- [Family Lives](#) - 0808 800 2222
- **Youth Access** - 020 8772 9900
- [BullyingUK](#) - 0808 800 2222