



## Anti-bullying policy

### *Statement of Intent*

Seagulls swimming club is 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 our club. If bullying does occur, all swimmers should be able to tell and know 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, coaches, or another officer of the club.

### *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 (e.g. threatening gestures, hiding floats/bags on poolside or in the changing room).
- Physical; any non-accidental physical contact hitting in the pool or changing area
- Racist; racial taunts, gestures.
- Sexual; unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic; because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality.
- Verbal; name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyber; All areas of the internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse.
- Mobile; threats by text messaging and calls.

### *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. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Seagulls swimming club has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### *Objectives of this Policy*

- All club officers, teachers and coaches, swimmers and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All club officers, teachers and coaches should know what the school 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.
- As a club, we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

### *Signs and Symptoms*

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be

aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from the club.
- Does not want to go on the club bus.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to the swimming club when they previously could not wait to go.
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Feels ill at training times and does not want to go to the club.
- Training and competition level drops off.
- Comes home with clothes torn or swimming equipment damaged or lost.
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully).
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Stops eating.
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- Is nervous & jumpy when a social media 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, coach, teacher or another club officer.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by that person and referred to the Welfare Officer if he/she is not already aware.
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
5. 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 using a behaviour contract.

#### *Outcomes*

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



### *Prevention*

We will use KIDSCAPE methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Writing a set of club rules.
- Signing a code of conduct.
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters.

## Club guidance to assist in dealing with bullying

### *Mediation*

- The Welfare Officer should be informed of any allegations of bullying of a swimmer under the age of 18.
- Ensure you receive information in writing and agree who will take the lead in investigating the concern. Usually this will be the Welfare Officer but in some cases the coach or teacher may wish to take the lead.
- Initially try to effect mediation between the parties. The mediator could be the Welfare Officer and / or the coach.
- When children involved are under 16 years of age, ensure a parent / guardian is present when the child is spoken to or another adult nominated by the parent.
- If the young person is 16/17 years of age the parent and young person can agree no parent to be present or nominate another adult.

If mediation fails the following guidance should be adhered to:

### *Set up a committee of 3 people*

- Normally this would be the welfare officer a suitable committee member or coach and a committee member who will take notes.
- Ensure all members of the committee are fully aware of the concerns raised and not involved in or related to any of the parties involved.
- Meet initially with the bullied young person and his / her parents as appropriate. Allow the young person concerned to explain the issues including what happened, where and how the incident made them feel. Reassure them they did right to raise the concern and that you take their concern seriously.
- In cases where the swimmer is 10 or under the parents may prefer to meet with the committee of 3 without the swimmer but with a letter in writing (self-written or with parents help if required) produced by the swimmer as to what happened etc.
- Ask the swimmer if there were any witnesses to what took place and if so ask the parents of those under 18 for consent to either speak to them or ask the parent to get in writing any information they have / what they saw etc. If the witness is over 18 you can approach them directly for this information.
- When you have all the information from the bullied swimmer speak to the alleged bully and his/her parent in line with above guidance. In some cases, you will find

they admit to wrong doing and you can go straight to taking appropriate action.

- If the alleged bully denies the incident(s) ask them for their side of the issue and if they have anyone who they wish you to speak to and do so in line with the above guidance.
- When you have no agreement or evidence on what happened it is for the committee of 3 to consider all the information and form a view' on what took place on the "balance of probabilities". This should be formed based on the information gathered and your view of what was alleged, previous concerns, knowledge of those involved etc.

Once an outcome is achieved confirming bullying took place either through evidence or on the balance of probabilities, consider what action you wish to take. Some options are:

- An apology and agreed proper behaviour.
- Signing and adhering to a behaviour contract.
- Suspension for a specified period of time.

Ensure everything is recorded and that all parties are kept informed of what is happening and outcomes/actions.

Time is of the essence in matters involving children. Ensure there is minimum delay in considering the matters and agreeing outcomes.

[www.culture.gov.uk](http://www.culture.gov.uk) - Help keep your child safe in sport. A child protection leaflet for parents. Downloadable or your club Welfare Officer will have a copy.

Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) - Call 0116 234 7278. CPSU have useful downloadable documents at [www.cpsu.org.uk](http://www.cpsu.org.uk)

## Help organisations

**Swimline** - 0808 100 4001

**KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline** 0845 1 205 204 - (Mon-Fri, 10am - 4 p m )

**Child line** - 0800 1111

Child Power Leaflet - Available from [jenni.dearman@swimming.org](mailto:jenni.dearman@swimming.org)

**Child Power** online via the ASA website [www.swimming.org](http://www.swimming.org)

**Parent line Plus** - 0808 800 2222

**Youth Access** - 020 8772 9900

**Bullying Online** - [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

Visit the Kidscape website [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) for further support, links and advice including downloads.