



Anti-Bullying Policy

Date of issue: 25th November 2011 (this version supersedes all previous versions)

Hatfield Swimming Club's Welfare Officers are:

Mrs Sarah Walton (01438 740117 or 07768 730830)

and

Mr Andy Hazlehurst (07831 205495)

Sarah and Andy should be the first point of contact for any welfare related issues.

Statement of intent

Hatfield Swimming Club is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can swim in a relaxed secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all swimmers or parents 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 a club welfare officer or any committee/coaching 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 (emotionally and physically), tormenting, sending hurtful text messages (e.g. hiding goggles/floats, threatening gestures)

Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

Racist: Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

Sexual: Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

Homophobic: Because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality

Verbal: Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

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. **This club has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.**

Objectives of this policy

- All committee members, coaches and teachers, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All committee members, teaching and coaching staff 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.
- As a club we take bullying seriously. Swimmers and parents should be assured that they would 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:

- Says he/she is being bullied
- Is unwilling to go to club sessions
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Feels ill before training sessions
- Comes home with clothes torn or swimming equipment damaged
- Has possessions “go missing”
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay a bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

Or in more extreme cases, if a child:

- Starts stammering
- Cries themselves to sleep at night, or has nightmares

- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Attempts or threatens suicide, or runs away

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

Procedures

- 1)** Report bullying incidents to the Club Welfare Officers (either **Sarah Walton** or **Andy Hazlehurst**) or a member of the **Committee/Coaching Staff**, or telephone Swimline on 0808 100 4001.
- 2)** In cases of serious bullying, the incident(s) will be referred to the ASA for advice.
- 3)** Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- 4)** If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
- 5)** The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying must be stopped quickly.
- 6)** An attempt will be made to help the bully (or bullies) to change their behaviour.
- 7)** If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue, the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution.

Hatfield Swimming Club action

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation, Hatfield Swimming Club will follow the procedure outlined below:

- 1)** Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
- 2)** If this fails or is not appropriate a small panel of three (made up either from the Chairman, Welfare Officer, Secretary, and other Committee Members) should meet with the parent and child alleging bullying to get details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.

- 3) The same three persons should meet with the alleged bully and parent/s and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed.
- 4) If in the view of the panel bullying has taken place the swimmer should be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the bullying continues. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
- 5) In some cases the parent can be asked to attend training sessions if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
- 6) All coaches involved with both swimmers should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

In the case of adults reported to be bullying swimmers under 18 years

- 1) The ASA should always be informed and will advise on action to be taken
- 2) It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a teacher or coach, child protection awareness training may be recommended.
- 3) More serious cases will be referred to the judicial complaints procedure.

Prevention

- The club had a code of conduct, which includes what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members, of which the anti-bullying policy is one part.
 - All swimmers and parents will sign to accept the code of conduct upon joining the club
 - The club welfare officer will raise awareness about bullying and why it matters, and if issues of bullying arise in the club, will consider meeting with swimmers to discuss the issue openly and constructively. This policy is based on that provided to schools by **KIDSCAPE**. KIDSCAPE is a voluntary organization committed to help prevent child bullying. KIDSCAPE can be contacted on 0207 7303300.
-