

Broomfield Park Swimming Club

Anti-Bullying Policy

(based on Wavepower 2024)

BPSC is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our members so they can learn to swim or train in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable within our sport. If bullying does occur, all our members or parents/guardians should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a **telling** organisation. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Club Welfare Officer, coach, teacher or another club officer.

Objectives of this policy

- All club members, coaches, teachers, officers of the club and parents/guardians should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All club members, coaches, teachers, officers of the club and parents/guardians should know what the club policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- As an organisation we take bullying seriously. Members and parents/guardians should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

What is bullying behaviour?

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as “the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online”.

Bullying can include:

Verbal: name calling, persistent teasing, mocking, taunting and threats.

Physical: any degree of physical violence including hitting, kicking and pushing.

Intimidating behaviour: theft or intentional damage of possessions.

Emotional: excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, setting people up and spreading rumours.

Cyber: the misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or a group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation.

‘Banter’: can include any of the above types of bullying in a way that may not be intended to cause harm to someone but doesn’t account for the impact such behaviour can have on an individual

Racist: bullying based on ethnicity, skin colour, and language, religious or cultural practices.

Homophobic and transphobic: bullying based on sexuality or gender identity.

Disablist: bullying children who have special educational needs and disabilities.

Sexual: unwelcome sexual advances, comments that intended to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation.

Discriminative: bullying based on any perceived weakness or difference. This could be because of their gender, age, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability or ability. It could also be factors surrounding the way someone looks or the clothes they wear, their family and social situation, hobbies and interests.

Bullying can occur between:

- An adult and child.
- Children (peer on peer).
- A parent/guardian and their own child.

The competitive nature of sport can create an environment which provides opportunities for bullying. Examples of bullying in our sports could be:

- a parent/guardian who pushes their child too hard;
- a coach who adopts a win-at-all-costs philosophy;
- a Member who intimidates others inappropriately; and
- an official who places unfair pressure on a person.

Bullying in our sport could include a child being ostracised by others in their lane, squad or age group, refusing to talk to them and/or encouraging others to treat them with contempt.

Most bullying incidents are not crimes. But some types of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. This includes bullying that involves violence, assault and theft; harassment or intimidation over a period of time including calling someone names or threatening them, making abusive phone calls and sending abusive emails or text messages (one incident is not normally enough to get a conviction); and anything involving hate crimes.

All Swim England affiliated organisations have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Procedures

- Report bullying incidents to an adult at the club.
- The adult must then inform the Club Welfare Officer.
- The Club Welfare Officer and the club will then decide the appropriate method for dealing with the situation, either as an alleged breach of the club Code of Conduct or as a welfare complaint.
- After a local resolution the conclusion must be referred to the Safeguarding and Welfare Team.
- Any serious or aggravating factors around bullying can be referred directly to the Swim England Safeguarding and Welfare Team in the first instance.
- Advice can be sought from the County or Regional Welfare Officer, Swim England Safeguarding and Welfare Team at any time.

Recommended club action

The Welfare Officer to be fully informed of any allegations involving bullying of a child or children at the club. The Welfare Officer to discuss the concerns with the Club Chair so a decision can be made as to whether it is appropriate for the club to deal with the situation as an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct or for the Welfare Officer to proceed with support from the club under the Anti-

Bullying Policy. Agree who will lead the investigation, this will usually be the Welfare Officer but sometimes the children's coach or teacher may wish to take the lead with assistance from the Welfare Officer. This is sometimes a preferred option if the children are more familiar with their coach/teacher.

Remember advice can be sought from the County or Regional Welfare Officer or the Swim England Child Safeguarding Team at any time.

- Initially try to reconcile the parties by bringing them together. A genuine recognition of the effects of their behaviour and an apology may solve the situation.
- Ensure that parents/guardians are made aware of the concerns and the proposed club action of reconciliation as described above.
- Record the outcome of the reconciliation attempt and advise the parents/guardians of that outcome.

If reconciliation fails, is deemed inappropriate in the situation or parents/guardians don't agree to a reconciliation attempt then:

1. Set up a panel of three, this would normally be led by the Welfare Officer alongside either the Club Secretary, Chair committee member or coach/teacher.
2. The panel to meet with the child and their parent/guardian alleging the bullying. Allow the child to explain in their own words what has been happening so that full details of the allegation are known. The panel will need to know when and where this has been happening, by whom and whether they think anyone witnessed the behaviour.
3. Some children may not feel comfortable talking to the panel even with the support of their parent/guardian so the child should be allowed to give a written account in their own words. The child's parent/guardian to then provide this account to the panel.
4. If there were any witnesses the same panel to speak to them to determine what they saw and any other information they have. If the witness is a child, the panel to make that contact via the parent/guardian. The advice at point 3 to be followed if required.
5. The panel to meet with the alleged bully and their parent/guardian to put the allegation to them and allow them the opportunity to respond to the allegation in their own words. The advice at point 3 to be followed if required.
6. If the bullying is admitted then the panel can make decisions immediately on appropriate actions.
7. If the bullying is denied the panel will need to consider and form a view on what is alleged on the balance of probabilities.
This view will be formed on all the available information gained by the panel from all sides, previous concerns and knowledge of the parties involved.
8. At all stages, minutes should be taken for clarity and agreed by all as a true account.

Potential club actions if bullying is found

- An apology from the bully and an agreement on future behaviour.
- A formal behaviour contract and ongoing monitoring to prevent repeated bullying.
- Disciplinary action such as a written warning, temporary suspension or permanent exclusion.
- Ensure all actions are recorded and that all parties are kept informed on what is happening and the outcomes.

Prevention

Everybody within the club has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying. It is mandatory for all Organisations to adhere to the Swim England Code of Ethics and accompanying Codes of Conduct. Wavepower provides Code of Conduct templates for Organisations to use and adapt. All Organisation Members must sign a copy of the Code of Conduct when they join an Organisation so they are aware and understand acceptable standards of behaviour.