

Broomfield Park Swimming Club

Complaints Policy

Broomfield Park Swimming Club is governed by the Laws of Swim England and has its own rules that comply with these laws. This policy defines the disciplinary procedures and how disputes or complaints are resolved. The Club is committed to providing an environment that is friendly, enjoyable and supportive, providing opportunities to develop skills through high standards of coaching and training for all its members.

We recognise that at times complaints, disputes or cases of ill-discipline may arise within the club and these are taken very seriously by the club. We aim to deal with these in a fair, consistent and an easy to follow process.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern with the action(s), apparent failings, decisions and/or behaviour in relation to services or activities provided by the club.

General principles

BPSC takes all complaints it receives seriously and aims to provide a high quality and responsive service to our members. When we receive a complaint we will:

- Provide a clear and easy to follow complaints process
- Respond fairly and efficiently, in line with the policy
- Handle all information sensitively and in line with data protection requirements
- Apologise if we have got something wrong, and where possible, act quickly to put it right; and
- Monitor complaints and learn from them.

We will accept complaints from members under the age of 18, however, in certain circumstances, we may need to involve the parent/guardian to progress the complaint.

BPSC staff and volunteers will conduct themselves in a courteous and responsive manner, listening to requests and concerns to advise what can be provided and in what manner. Where we are unable to meet a request, we will let you know why and advise you of the most appropriate place to direct your request, seeking your permission to forward your email onto the relevant person or department and requesting that they progress the matter directly with you.

We will treat all people with respect, on the basis of equal opportunities and free from discrimination, taking any necessary steps to accommodate reasonable requests, wherever practicable.

Scope of the policy

You can complain to the club under this policy if you think that BPSC has:

- Provided you with poor customer service
- Treated you unfairly or has discriminate against you
- Failed to properly follow one of its own policies or procedures

- Note reached a decision within the scope of its jurisdiction properly, and/or
- Failed to give you access to information which you are legally entitled to or has given you incorrect advice or information.

This policy does not cover complaints, including (but not limited to):

- Safeguarding concerns
- Whistleblowing
- Complaints which have been concluded in accordance with another policy; or which have been investigated and resolved in accordance with this policy
- Anonymous complaints - we will consider anonymous complaints, however in the event that anonymity prevents us from investigating the matter appropriately then we reserve the right to advise that we are unable to accept such complaint

Resolution procedure

Step 1: Informal Discussion/Resolution

Initially the complainant should bring the complaint to the attention of their coach in the first instance. The club encourages the use of informal discussions to resolve issues of concern, as this will ensure resolution as quickly as possible.

A written note of the key details of the complaint will be retained by the club in accordance with our Data Protection Policy to enable a continual review of our processes and procedures.

Step 2: Raising a formal complaint

If the informal discussion does not resolve the issue, or the complaint is more complex, and/or requires investigation and a formal response then the complainant should send an email to the Welfare Officer at welfare.bpsc@gmail.com within 90 days of the incident. If the Welfare Officer is a party to the dispute then an email should be sent to the club president at chair.bpsc@gmail.com.

While the passage of time is not a barrier to raising a complaint, complainants should appreciate that historic complaints may be a challenge to investigate and respond to.

The email should state:

- The nature of the issue.
- The action that was taken by the coach
- Reasons why the action is disputed, or complaint raised,
- The date and time of the incident and names of any witnesses to the event.

Step 3: Handling the formal complaint

Once a formal dispute/complaint has been received then:

- The welfare officer (or nominated member of the club's committee) will acknowledge the dispute or complaint by reply using the same contact method as received within 10 working days.
- The welfare officer (or nominated member of the club's committee) will then appoint an Independent Investigator, (usually a member of the Committee or a Coach unconnected with the incident or persons involved)

- The Independent Investigator will provide a detailed email or written response to the Complainant with the findings and action to be taken, within 25 working days of receipt.
- If the reply will take longer than 25 working days to respond this will be explained with the reasons to the complainant at the earliest opportunity.

Step 4: Appeals

If, on receipt of this explanation, the complainant is still dissatisfied with the explanation, they can appeal the decision with the 'Judicial Commissioner' at the office of Judicial Administration, Swim England. Any appeal must be formally registered in writing to the 'Judicial Commissioner' via email to judicial@swimming.org.

In such cases appeals will be conducted with the Swim England procedure in force at the time.

Persistent, frivolous or vexatious complaints

Whilst we acknowledge an individual's right to complain, we expect our staff and volunteers to be treated courteously at all times. Violent, abusive or discourteous language or behaviour towards club staff or volunteers will not be tolerated and may result in the complaint of anyone engaging in such behaviour being rendered invalid. Where there is a threat or use of physical violence or verbal abuse towards club staff and/or volunteers, the club in its sole discretion may cease all communication with the relevant individual and the behaviour may be reported to the police.

Whilst the club appreciates that in certain circumstances you may not be happy with the outcome of your complaint or appeal, where the proper process has been followed in accordance with this policy, the club will be unable to take any further action.

Persistent or repeated complaints will be dealt with as follows:

- A complaint will be deemed persistent if it is substantially the same as a previous complaint from that complainant and contains no fresh allegations and/or evidence which significantly affect the account of the previous complaint.
- A complaint will be deemed repeat if it is substantially the same as a previous complaint from a different complainant and contains no fresh allegations and/or evidence which significantly affect the account of the previous complaint. In the event that a complaint is received which relates to a matter which is already being considered under this policy, the additional complaint will be adjoined to the first complaint and will be considered as a whole. Where a complaint is received which relates to a matter already considered and finalised, the complainant will be advised that the matter has been considered previously and advised of the outcome. Their complaint will therefore be considered concluded on the same basis.

A complaint will be deemed frivolous or vexatious if it is initiated to cause annoyance or nuisance and/or is made with the sole purpose of abusing the club's processes and procedures for dealing with complaints.

If a complaint is considered persistent, frivolous or vexatious, the club will write to the complainant explaining our decision and thereafter bring the communication to a close, no longer dealing with a complainant in relation to that complaint.

Confidentiality

BPSC is committed to keeping the details of your complaint confidential and will not share your information without your permission. However, please note in order to investigate a complaint it may be necessary to speak to the person(s) in respect of whom your complaint has been made and/or relevant witnesses (where appropriate). We will inform these parties that the details of the complaint should remain confidential, however, the club accepts no responsibility for any breach of confidentiality by such parties.

Appendix 1

BPSC COMPLAINT FORM

Name:	
Email address:	
Telephone number:	
Swim England number:	
Date:	

Please give full details of your Complaint (including the date of incident):

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Please provide details of the club regulation or policy section that you consider has been breached (if appropriate):

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Please briefly explain the steps you have already taken to resolve your complaint, including the details of anyone at BPSC you have previously spoken to about your complaint?

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Please list all documents that you intend to rely on in relation to your complaint and submit copies of these documents with this complaint form: