



Anti-Bullying Procedure

Orpington Ojays is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all members. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying in any form. We believe in promoting positive interactions, mutual respect, and the well-being of every individual within our swimming club.

Bullying is a serious issue that can have detrimental effects on individuals and the overall atmosphere of a swimming club and generally refers to repeated and intentional aggressive behaviour that causes harm, distress, or discomfort to another person, either physically or emotionally.

Our anti-bullying policy can be found as part of Wavepower - Swim England Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures a copy of which can be found on our website.

If bullying does occur, all members or parents/guardians, should be able to tell and know that we will deal with incidents quickly and effectively, using the following procedure:

1. In the first instance, if another member's behaviour is causing you or other members concern, during, before or after practice, at a gala or other club event then you should speak to your Coach or Team Manager so that the matter can be dealt with immediately under the Code of Conduct Policy
2. Report bullying behaviour to the club's welfare officer, your coach or other officer of the club either verbally or via email. The Welfare Officer can be contacted at welfare@orpingtonojays.com
3. Any report received will be communicated immediately to the Welfare Officer
4. The Welfare Officer will discuss the concerns with the Club Chair to decide whether the matter should be dealt with as an alleged breach of the club Code of Conduct or whether the matter proceeds under the Anti-Bullying Policy
5. Under the Anti-Bullying procedure, the Welfare Officer will usually contact the coach and make preliminary enquiries concerning the report. The coach may speak to any individuals involved and report back to the Welfare Officer
6. The Chair will agree with Welfare Officer as to whom will lead an investigation which may be the Welfare Officer, Coach or Committee member depending on circumstances
7. Parents/guardians of either party will be informed and may be asked to come to a face-to-face meeting to discuss issues

8. An attempt will be made to reconcile the parties and a genuine recognition of the effects of their behaviour and an apology may solve the situation. Any reconciliation will be recorded and communicated to all parties involved.
9. If reconciliation fails or is deemed inappropriate, then a panel of three led by the Welfare Officer alongside either the Club Secretary, Chair, committee member or coach will be appointed to conduct a hearing with the parties involved, and will follow the procedure outlined in Wavepower.
10. If bullying is admitted or deemed to be the case on the balance of probability the panel will make decisions on appropriate actions to be taken, which may include a formal apology and a contract of behaviour to prevent repeated bullying. The club will issue a formal warning and a temporary or permanent exclusion may be applied under the club's constitution.

Examples of Bullying

1 Verbal Bullying

- Using derogatory language or insults directed at another swimmer, coach, or staff member.
- Mocking or belittling someone's appearance, skills, or performance.
- Threatening or intimidating language, such as making harmful comments or spreading rumours.

2 Physical Bullying

- Physically pushing, shoving, hitting, or otherwise causing harm to another individual.
- Tampering with someone's personal belongings or equipment.
- Engaging in rough play that intentionally causes discomfort or harm to others.

3 Social Bullying

- Excluding a swimmer from group activities, practices, or social gatherings without a valid reason.
- Spreading false rumours or gossip about another swimmer or coach with the intention of harming their reputation.
- Manipulating social dynamics to isolate or marginalize a particular individual.

4 Cyberbullying

- Sending hurtful or threatening messages to another swimmer or coach through social media, text messages, or other digital platforms.
- Sharing embarrassing or inappropriate photos or videos of someone without their consent.



- Creating fake online profiles or accounts to harass or impersonate others.

5 Excessive Criticism

- Continuously singling out a swimmer for harsh criticism
- Consistently pointing out flaws or mistakes in a demeaning manner during practices or competitions.

6 Coercion and Manipulation

- Forcing or pressuring a swimmer to engage in activities they are uncomfortable with, either in or out of the pool.
- Manipulating others to gain power, control, or advantage within the club.

7 Isolation

- Deliberately excluding a swimmer from team activities, conversations, or events to make them feel unwelcome or isolated.

8 Hazing

- Subjecting new members or younger swimmers to humiliating or degrading initiation rituals as a form of acceptance into the group.

9 Threats and Intimidation

- Using threats or intimidation to control or influence the behaviour of others, such as pressuring someone to follow certain instructions against their will.

10 Persistent Practical Jokes

- Continuously playing practical jokes on the same individual, even after it's clear they're uncomfortable or upset.
- It is not uncommon for individuals who engage in bullying behaviour to attempt to justify their actions by claiming that it was all meant in good fun. This can be a way for bullies to downplay the harm they've caused and avoid taking responsibility for their actions.

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