

# Discipline, Disputes and Complaints Policy



This page explains the definition of each role as described in the Code of Conduct and Discipline, Disputes and Complaints policy. This is to minimise the number of references to roles and for ease of reading. A person may have many roles in that they may be a Coach, a Committee member and undertake officiating at competitions and / or a Parent of a Swimmer.

## Role Definitions:

Swimmer (Person who is to undertake swimming under the responsibility of PSC).

Swimmer's carer (Parent, Guardian, Carer or Person responsible for the Swimmer whilst present at training or in competition at home or away).

Coach (all Coaching staff or Persons performing agreed PSC coaching duties at the time).

Committee (Persons with a role on the committee such as Chairperson, Secretary, Welfare Officer, Treasurer, member etc).

Officials (Referees, Time keepers, Scorers, Starter). Helpers (poolside, non-poolside, volunteers).

Discipline, Disputes and Complaints Policy.

Putteridge Swimming Club is a voluntary organisation with approximately 80 Members. The Club is governed by the Laws of the Amateur Swimming Association and has its own rules that comply with these laws. The Club is committed to all its members by providing opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and values necessary for each individual to become a healthy, capable and concerned participant of the Club. The Club is a competitive swimming Club and its coaching structures and timetables have been established to optimise this goal. Swimmers, Swimmer's carers, Committee members, Coaches, Helpers and Officials are all volunteers and rely on the support of the membership to create and maintain an atmosphere of friendliness, health and goodwill to run the Club effectively. The Club have a set of rules laid out in the code of conduct that is applicable to all those involved with the Club and this policy defines the discipline procedures and how disputes or complaints are resolved. Scope This policy explains the Club's rules on how discipline, disputes and complaints will be addressed and resolved and applies to all associated with the Club.

## Definitions used

Disputes: A difference of opinion either between members or on matters concerning the running or coaching of the Club. Discipline: The behaviour or rules expected of all Members or people associated with PSC as laid out in the code of conduct. Complaints: A formal expressed dissatisfaction, frustration or annoyance over an item relating to the activities undertaken by PSC. ASA: British Swimming Amateur Swimming Association.

Disciplinary. When a Swimmer behaves in a way that contravenes the Club's 'Code of Conduct' then the Swimmer's Coach will initially address the issue with few words of advice. If the breach is of a serious nature the Swimmer will be asked to leave the pool immediately and sit poolside. The Coach will explain to the Swimmer why and will report the incident to the Swimmer's Carer after the session and inform the Club's Welfare Officer and either the Club Secretary or Chairperson. If the Club's Welfare Officer is sufficiently concerned the Swimmer's conduct will be raised as a minute item at the next committee meeting. If the breach is less serious or the earlier verbal advice is ignored or issues are (regularly) repeated, the Coach will again remind the Swimmer to be aware of their behaviour, to

ask the Swimmer to stop their behaviour and will report the incident to the Swimmer's Carer after the session. At this stage the Swimmer may be asked to get out of the water and sit pool side until the Coach indicates that they can get back in to the water. For non-participants it is expected that the responsible Carer will provide the reminder. Where there is not a responsible Carer present the Club's Welfare Officer will contact the Carer after the session. If a sanction or other action is required to address the incident, then this will be communicated at this stage. On occasions when the Swimmer and their Carer may feel the need for a fuller explanation of the Coach's action, then the issuing Coach can be approached after a session for an explanation. If a Swimmer is sent out of a session twice within two consecutive months then they will face a temporary suspension and a meeting shall be called between the Club's Welfare Officer, the Senior Coach and another member of the Committee, but not the Chairperson. Following that meeting appropriate action shall be taken which may result in the suspension being lifted and a warning given over future conduct or an ongoing suspension from the Club. The Swimmer or Swimmer's Carer will be given the outcome within two days of the meeting. If the Swimmer or Carer is then dissatisfied with the verbal explanation given regarding the incident and the resulting action, they then have the right to make a complaint as explained in this policy.

Disputes and Complaints. If any person associated with the Club has a dispute or complaint regarding their treatment during any Club activity, they should bring this to the attention of their coach or the Club Welfare Officer in the first instance. The Club encourages the use of informal discussion to resolve issues as this provides an opportunity for early resolution as quickly as possible. If this does not resolve the issue then please follow these steps: Any dispute or complaint should be written and sent either by email or in writing to the Chairperson within seven days of the incident arising, stating: The nature of the issue, the action that was taken by the coach or the Club Welfare Officer, reasons why the action is disputed or complaint raised, along with the date and time of the incident and names of any witnesses to the event. The Chairperson will acknowledge the dispute or complaint by reply using the same contact method as received. The Chairperson will then appoint an Independent Investigator, (a member of the Committee or a Coach unconnected with the incident or persons involved), who will have seven days from the date of the acknowledgement, to provide a detailed email or written response to the Complainant with the findings and action to be taken. If, on receipt of this explanation, the Complainant is still dissatisfied with the explanation they have a further 7 days in which to lodge an appeal by submitting a formal email or written complaint to the Chairperson, stating reasons for the appeal.

Appeals. On receipt of the appeal the Chairperson will arrange a meeting (time and location agreeable to all) to take place as soon as possible (or no later than seven days) following the receipt of the appeal. The aim of the meeting is to seek a resolution having heard and understood all the details of the dispute. Prior to the meeting it is expected that attendees will: \* have read and understood the Club's disputes or complaints procedure.\* have read and understood all communications in relation to the appeal\* have prepared and exchanged any further communications or statements to be discussed at the appeal meeting.\* if required, have obtained and exchanged any witnesses statements. At this meeting the Complainant along with the Chairperson, Club Welfare officer and the Investigating person must attend. The Complainant may be accompanied by a companion and must notify the Chairperson the name before the appeal. The Chairperson, Club Welfare Officer (and a companion) will form the appeal panel. If the meeting cannot be arranged within the seven days, then the reasons for the delay are to be minuted. At the appeal meeting the responsibilities and format will be:

- 1 Chairperson will minute the meeting
- 2 The Investigator will present their findings first, explaining the reasons for the action they have taken.

- 3 The Complainant will then be able to ask any questions about the case the investigator has presented.
- 4 The Chairperson will also have an opportunity to ask any questions.
- 5 The Complainant will then be asked to present their case to the panel.
- 6 The Investigator may then wish to ask the member any questions about their case.
- 7 The appeal panel members will also have the opportunity to ask any questions.
- 8 Both parties will have the chance to summarise up their case.
- 9 The Chairperson's aim is to seek an early resolution and will then ask the Member and Investigator to leave the room. The Appeal panel will consider the information they have heard and reach their decision.
- 10 All parties will then be invited back and the decision will be communicated verbally and will also be confirmed later in writing (again to either party), no later than 5 days after the appeal Hearing.
- 11 The result of the appeal is minuted at the next Club committee meeting. All meetings will be conducted in a manner which enables both sides to put forward their cases.

Notes: Where it is not possible to meet this timescale because further investigation is required, any extension to the deadlines set out in this procedure should, if possible, be agreed with the Complainant. Reasons for the extensions must be recorded and an estimation of the revised timescale given. If the Committee cannot find an Independent Investigator, then they will refer the matter to the ASA of the region. In cases where two or more people raise a complaint on the same issue, this will be known as a "Collective Complaint". In such cases, an appropriate representative may set out details of the complaint in writing on behalf of the Members. The above procedure will also apply in cases where the Complainant is no longer a member of the Club.

After the Appeal meeting. The Complainant will be informed of the outcome with supporting reasons of the appeal in writing within seven working days of the appeal meeting taking place. At this stage the decision will be binding. If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the final response from the Club, then they have the right to appeal to the ASA.