

## **West Suffolk Swimming Club Anti-Bullying Policy**

As a Swim England affiliated club, West Suffolk Swimming Club (the Club) is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can learn to swim and train in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our Club.

Annual reminders and renewal of membership agreements, including Codes of Conduct and Club policies, alongside Wavepower 2024 are promoted to remind members of expectations.

If bullying does occur, all members should be able to speak out and feel reassured that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows or suspects that bullying is happening is expected to inform the Welfare Officer, coach or another officer of the Club.

The Club Welfare Officers are Liz Creasy (Bury/Culford) and Sarah Sepanski (Haverhill). They can be contacted through [welfare@westsuffolkswimming.co.uk](mailto:welfare@westsuffolkswimming.co.uk).

### **What Is Bullying behaviour?**

Bullying can be:

- Verbal: Name calling, persistent teasing, mocking, taunting and threats.
- Physical: Any form of physical violence, intimidating behaviour, theft or the intentional damage of possessions. This includes hitting, kicking and pushing.
- Emotional: Excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, setting people up and spreading rumours.
- Cyber: Cyber bullying is 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.
- Racist: Bullying based on ethnicity, skin colour, language, religion or cultural practices.
- Homophobic: Discrimination based on sexuality and/or gender identity.
- Sexual: Unwelcome sexual advances or remarks that are intended to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation. This could include pressure to send images of a sexual nature.
- Disablist: The bullying of children who have special educational needs and disabilities.
- Based on 'difference': Bullying based on any real or perceived difference. This can include, but is not limited to, factors surrounding the way someone looks or dresses, hobbies and interests, family situation or social behaviour.

## **Procedures**

The following procedures should be observed for incidents of bullying, or suspected bullying:

- Report incidents of bullying to the Welfare Officer, coach, or another officer of the Club.
- Incidents are to be recorded by that person and referred to the Welfare Officer.
- The bullying behaviour, or threats of bullying, must be investigated by the Welfare Officer(s); the Welfare Officers, on behalf of WSSC, will then decide the appropriate method for dealing with the situation.
- In serious cases, parents should be informed and will be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the problem.
- If bullying is found on the 'balance of probability' to have taken place, then appropriate action will be taken. This includes attempting to help the bully/bullies to change their behaviour.
- Advice can also be sought from the County or Regional Welfare Officer (as appropriate), Local Authority Designated Officer or Swim England Safeguarding and Welfare Team at any time. If necessary and appropriate, the police or social services will be consulted.

## **Outcomes**

The following are intended outcomes of applying this policy in instances of bullying:

- The bully/bullies will be asked to apologise and, in serious cases, a formal written warning of suspension given.
- If possible, the members will be reconciled. After the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- Repetition of bullying behaviour after a formal written warning has been given will result in a week's suspension from training. Longer periods of suspension and exclusion will be considered for more serious breaches.

April 2024