

CALLIGO TIGERS SWIMMING CLUB ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Calligo Tigers Swimming Club (Tigers) adheres to the Swim England Child Protection Policy on bullying procedures.

At Tigers we are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every swimmer, can develop his/her full potential.

We expect each and every swimmer to display courtesy, good manners and respect to each other. We expect our swimmers to care and support each other, show mutual tolerance for each other and possess unconditional respect for everyone regardless of gender, age, culture, religion or ethnicity.

Tigers expects high standards in terms of swimmers' commitment to training, endeavour and achievement, this also extends to the club's expectations of our swimmers' behaviour at all times. It is essential therefore that the club have consistent and fair policies in relation to breaches of behaviour. Acceptance of this policy therefore forms part of our standard terms and conditions.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that:

- Swimmers, parents and staff are aware that bullying of any form is always unacceptable
- Swimmers have the right to be safe and happy in the club and can train and compete in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied
- Every swimmer is protected when he/she is feeling vulnerable
- A culture is created where swimmers who are being bullied, or others who know about it, come forward to report behaviour and feel that they will be listened to and be believed, and that action taken will be swift but sensitive to their concerns
- The bully is made aware that his/her behaviour is unacceptable and has caused distress
- Revenge by the victim that is not appropriate
- Problems are resolved through a variety of methods

Any kind of bullying is unacceptable. Bullying should never be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Where necessary, the club will apply the sanctions described in our Sanctions Policy (below) for behaviour that constitutes bullying or harassment of any kind.

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Definition of Bullying

Bullying is a form of peer-on-peer abuse and is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour of any kind, harming or humiliating of another person by an individual or group, usually repeated over a period of time. The club recognises that bullying can take a variety of forms, including cyber-bullying (i.e. the use of information and communication technologies to support, deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others). It can take the form of racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist, homophobic, Special Educational Needs or disability related bullying. It could involve physical (including sexual) intimidation, or bullying by verbal, cyber (including social networking websites like Twitter, Snapchat, Facebook and Instagram, chat rooms, email, e-photographs, mobile phones and text messages), or emotional means (for example by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory. It can cause serious and lasting psychological damage and even suicide. Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

Signs of Bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a swimmer is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to attend training sessions, frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to training
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Change to established habits, e.g. giving up swimming sessions, or requesting to change to an alternative session
- Diminished levels of self-confidence and displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Frequent visits to the doctor with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Choosing the company of adults
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiencing nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away, and
- Any other discernible change in behaviour

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Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying, should be investigated by parents and Club staff and officials.

Anti-bullying Principles

Our Club aims to adopt anti-bullying strategies and intervention systems in order to:

- Welcoming brief to new Club Members about behaviour expectations
- Create an environment within which individuals feel safe, care about each other, value and respect each other, recognise and reward achievement and progress, with senior swimmers acting as champions and leaders, and acting as role models for the younger swimmers
- Prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour
- React to bullying or cyberbullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way
- Safeguard the swimmer who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the swimmer
- Apply disciplinary sanctions to the swimmer and / or swimmers causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multi-agency support
- Safeguard the swimmers in the real and virtual world
- Ensure that swimmers, staff and parents are educated to understand what bullying and cyberbullying are and what their consequences can be through, amongst other things, anti-bullying workshops, staff training, frequent Welfare Officer led groups and discussions with swimmers
- Educate the swimmers to understand both the benefits and the risks of technology, and to equip children with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly
- Have procedures in place to prevent incidents of cyberbullying within the Club or within the club 'community'
- Ensure that we monitor the effectiveness of our prevention measures

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Support for victims of bullying

Swimmers who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff, who will offer reassurance and tell them that they have done the right thing in telling
- Offering continuing support to restore self-esteem and confidence
- In cases of cyberbullying, advise the person to consider what information they have in the public domain; unless the victim sees it as a punishment, they may be advised to change accounts e.g. mobile phone number, twitter account, etc. If hurtful or embarrassing content is being distributed, try to get it removed from the web. If the person who posted it is known, ask them to remove it. Alternatively, contact the host provider and make a report to get the content taken down
- In some cases, the person being bullied may be able to block the person bullying from their sites and services, and
- Advise the child not to retaliate or reply. Instead, keep the evidence and take it to a Club Welfare Officer

The Club Welfare Officer will:

- Discuss what happened and discover why the person bullied became involved
- Establish the wrong doing and need to change, and
- Inform parents/guardians to help change the attitude of the swimmer

Sanction Policy - How the Club deals with allegations of peer-on-peer abuse or bullying:

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents of bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and sent to the Welfare Officer and Club Vice President
- An investigation will take place. All concerned with the incident will be interviewed and a record kept of interviews, completed electronic copies of these will be kept by the Club Welfare Officer

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- Staff and swimmers should be advised to preserve evidence and a record of abuse and / or bullying; where possible, they should save phone messages, record or save and print instant messenger conversations, print or produce a screenshot of social network pages, print, save and forward to staff whole email messages
- If images are involved, determine whether they might be illegal or raise child protection concerns. If this is the case, the Welfare Officer will contact the Police Community Liaison Officer for advice and direction, with the knowledge that this may result in formal police action
- Coaches will be kept informed where necessary and appropriate
- Parents will be kept informed
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate; there will also be an attempt to support the perpetrator of the bullying by talking through what lay behind his / her actions and ensuring he / she understands why a sanction is imposed
- Approach to reintroducing the swimmers into the pool
- Sanctions will be in the form of **verbal warning** (Level 1), **written warning** (Level 2), **suspension** (Level 3), or **expulsion** from the club (Level 4).
- Level 2 or above sanctions will be determined by committee only, no individual club member can determine or impose sanctions, and
- Swimmers, if awarded a sanction, can appeal to the Club President in writing, or via email. This will then be considered by the committee