

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Contents

1.	Introduction	2
2.	Statement of Intent.....	2
3.	Objectives of this policy	2
4.	What is bullying?.....	2
5.	Why is it important to respond to bullying?	3
6.	Signs and symptoms.....	3
7.	Procedures.....	4
8.	Outcomes.....	5
9.	Prevention.....	5
10.	Other Information and Helpful Organisations.....	5

1. Introduction

This policy has been modelled on the anti-bullying guidance provided by Kidscape. The club will also comply with Swim England’s anti-bullying policy as set out in Wavepower.

The following are links to resources or contacts referenced from this Policy:

Kidscape Help with Bullying	http://kidscape.org.uk/
Swim England Wavepower	https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/wavepower-child-safeguarding-for-clubs/
GCSC Welfare Officer	Welfare@Gloucestercityswimmingclub.co.uk

2. Statement of Intent

Gloucester City Swimming Club (GCSC) is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can train in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. Members and parents will be adequately supported.

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 or member of the club.

3. Objectives of this policy

The objectives of this policy are that:

- All officers, volunteers, coaches, members and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All officers, volunteers and coaches should know what the club’s policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All members and parents should know what the club’s policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

4. What is bullying?

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace, and comes in many different forms:

- **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.

5. Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Members of the club who are bullying others need to learn to behave more appropriately.

GCSC has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

6. Signs and symptoms

Although a child may not necessarily explicitly state that they are being bullied, they may still display signs or behaviours that indicate he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these signs and be prepared to investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from the club
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to the club when they previously could not wait to go
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill at training times and does not want to go
- Starts to drop in their level of training or competition
- Comes home with clothes torn or equipment damaged/lost
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (in order to pay a bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying siblings or other children
- Stops eating or has less of an appetite
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Is afraid to use the internet or their mobile phone
- Is nervous or jumpy when a message is received
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

7. Procedures

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

- Report incidents of bullying to the Welfare Officer, the Coach, or another officer of the club
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents are to be recorded by that person and referred to the Welfare Officer if he/she is not already aware
- In serious cases, parents should be informed and will be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the problem
- If necessary and appropriate, the police or social services will be consulted
- The bullying behaviour, or threats of bullying, must be investigated and the bullying must be stopped quickly
- 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

8. Outcomes

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

- The bully/bullies may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
- 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

9. Prevention

We will use Kidscape methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Writing a set of 'club rules'
- Signing a behaviour contract
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters

10. Other Information and Helpful Organisations

Further information or advice may be obtained from the following resources:

- Swim England's Child Welfare and Safeguarding publication Wavepower – <https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/wavepower-child-safeguarding-for-clubs/>
- Swim England safeguarding publications for Children – two leaflets for primary or secondary school age, available to buy or download from Swim England's website: <https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/safeguarding-resources-for-children/>
- NSPCC helpline – 0808 800 5000
- Kidscape Parents Helpline: <http://www.kidscape.co.uk> – email them via website and they will contact you. This is a temporary way of making contact due to COVID19.
- ChildLine – 0800 1111
- tic+ counselling and support – 01594 372 777, <https://ticplus.org.uk/>
- Family Lives: (formerly Parentline Plus) 0808 800 2222, or <https://www.familylives.org.uk/>