



## Anti-Bullying Policy

Preston Swimming Club are committed to provide a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our members so they can swim in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying, be it verbal, physical, emotional, retaliatory or reactive, will not be tolerated within the club.

Our Welfare Officers, Coaches, Teachers and other Club Officials adhere to the ASA Wavepower 2016-19 guidelines on spotting the signs and symptoms of bullying, and dealing with the consequences of it.

If bullying does occur, all swimmers or parents should be able to report the incident and know that it will be dealt with promptly and effectively. All members, parents and coaches will be expected to ensure that the policy will be adhered to.

- We are a TELLING organisation. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Welfare Officer, Coach, Teacher or another Official or employee of the organisation.

### **Objectives of Policy**

- All committee members, teachers, coaches, poolside helpers, swimmers and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All committee members, teachers and coaches should know what the club policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All swimmers and parents should know what the club policy is on bullying, and what to do if bullying arises.
- As a club we take bullying seriously. Swimmers and parents should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

### **What is bullying?**

Bullying is the deliberate and 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:

Bullying can include:

- **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.

### 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 organisation who are bullying others need to learn to behave more appropriately.

Organisations have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### 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 organisation.
- Doesn't want to go on the club bus.
- 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.

### Procedure and Club Action

Preston Swimming Club take all allegations of bullying seriously and will aim to respond quickly to any such incidents.

1. All reports of bullying incidents should be reported to the Club Welfare Officer, Coach and / or Teacher.
2. In all cases the incidents are to be recorded by that person and referred to the Welfare Officer if he/she is not already aware.
3. The bullying behaviour, or threats of bullying, will be investigated in line with the Club **Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure**, and the bullying must be stopped quickly.
4. In serious cases, parents will be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
5. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.

In cases of adults reported to be bullying swimmers under the age of 18 years

1. The Club may defer to the ASA for advice on appropriate action.
2. It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a poolside helper or coach, child protection awareness training may be recommended.
3. More serious cases may be referred to the Police or Social Services.

#### **Outcomes**

- 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.

More details may be found in the Club **Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure**.