



Anti-bullying Policy

This policy is written in accordance with the guidelines issued by Swim England in its Wavepower 2020-23 document.

HHSC is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our members so they can learn to swim or train in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all our members or parents/guardians should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a telling organisation. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Club Welfare Officer, coach, teacher or another club officer.

1. Objectives of this policy

All club members, coaches, teachers, officers of the club and parents/guardians should have an understanding of what bullying is.

- 1.1 All club members, coaches, teachers, officers of the club and parents/guardians should know what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- 1.2 HHSC take bullying seriously. Members and parents/guardians should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported.
- 1.3 Bullying will not be tolerated.

2. What is bullying behaviour?

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as “the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace”.

3. Bullying can include:

- Verbal: name calling, persistent teasing, mocking, taunting and threats.
- Physical: any degree of physical violence including hitting, kicking and pushing.
- Intimidating behaviour, theft or the intentional damage of possessions.
- Emotional: excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, setting people up and spreading rumours.
- Cyber: 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.

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

4. Procedures

- 4.1 Incidents of bullying should be reported to the Club Welfare Officer, coach, teacher or other officer at the club.
- 4.2 The Club Welfare Officer should be informed if a report of bullying is received by another officer so that appropriate action is taken.
- 4.3 The Club Welfare Officer will discuss the concerns with the Club Chair to decide whether the matter should be dealt with as an alleged breach of the club Code of Conduct or whether the matter proceeds under the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- 4.4 Initially, the club will try to reconcile the parties by bringing them together. A genuine recognition of the effects of their behaviour and an apology may solve the situation.

The club will ensure that parents/guardians are made aware of the concerns and the proposed club's action of reconciliation as described above.

The club will record the outcome of the reconciliation attempt and advise the parents/guardians of that outcome.

- 4.5 If reconciliation fails, is deemed inappropriate in the situation or parents/guardians don't agree to a reconciliation attempt then HHSC will:
 - 4.5.1 Set up a panel of three, this would normally be led by the Welfare Officer alongside either the Club Secretary, Chairman, committee member or coach/teacher.
 - 4.5.2 The panel will meet with the child and their parent/guardian alleging the bullying. Allow the child to explain in their own words what has been happening so that full details of the allegation are known. The panel will need to know when and where this has been happening, by whom and whether they think anyone witnessed the behaviour.
 - 4.5.3 Some children may not feel comfortable talking to the panel even with the support of their parent/guardian so the child should be allowed to give a written account in their own words. The child's parent/guardian to then provide this account to the panel.
 - 4.5.4 If there were any witnesses, the same panel will speak to them to determine what they saw and any other information they have. If the witness is a child the panel to make that contact via the parent/guardian. The advice at point 3 to be followed if required.
 - 4.5.5 The panel to meet with the alleged bully and their parent/guardian to put the allegation to them and allow them the opportunity to respond to the allegation in their own words.
 - 4.5.6 If the bullying is admitted then the panel can make decisions immediately on appropriate actions.
 - 4.5.7 If the bullying is denied the panel will need to consider and form a view on what is alleged on the balance of probabilities. This view will be formed on all the

available information gained by the panel from all sides, previous concerns and knowledge of the parties involved.

- 4.5.8 At all stages minutes should be taken for clarity and agreed by all as a true account.

5. Potential club actions if bullying is found

- 5.1 An apology from the bully and an agreement on future behaviour.
- 5.2 A formal behaviour contract and ongoing monitoring to prevent repeated bullying.
- 5.3 Disciplinary action such as a written warning, temporary suspension or permanent exclusion.
- 5.4 The club will ensure that all actions are recorded and that all parties are kept informed on what is happening and the outcomes.

6. Cyberbullying

Behaviour that is classed as cyberbullying can include:

- 6.1 Abusive comments, rumours, gossip and threats over the internet or using other digital communications. This includes “trolling”.
- 6.2 Sharing pictures, videos or personal information without consent and with the intent to cause harm and/or humiliation.
- 6.3 Hacking into someone’s email, phone, or online profiles to extract and share personal information, or to send abusive or inappropriate content while posing as that person.
- 6.4 Creating specific websites that negatively target an individual or a group.
- 6.5 Blackmail or pressuring someone to do something online they do not want to do.
- 6.6 Some cyberbullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including the Malicious Communications Act 1988 and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.
- 6.7 Whilst HHSC commits to ensure that its website and social networking sites are being used appropriately and to deal with any bullying behaviour on these platforms it becomes more challenging when behaviour being reported is happening outside the environment of the club.
- 6.8 If children involved in alleged cyberbullying are members of HHSC parents/guardians can be assured that the club will ensure that behaviour within the club environment remains in accordance with the Code of Conduct and should any bullying behaviour be reported during club time then any necessary action will be taken
- 6.9 **Practical steps parents and guardians can take:**
 - 6.9.1 Many incidents of cyberbullying allow those experiencing it to keep

evidence, for example, a screen shot, to show their parent/ guardian or in serious cases the police.

- 6.9.2 Make sure your child knows how to block anyone who posts hateful or abusive things. This can usually be found on the help or online safety area of the app or online service.
- 6.9.3 Report anyone who is bullying your child to the platform that carried the offending comments, audio, image or video. Many online services and apps have a report now button that can be used.
- 6.9.4 Advice can always be sought from the police.
- 6.9.5 Use the links below for expert advice and guidance.

Kidscape kidscape.org.uk

Anti-Bullying Alliance anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit the cpsu.org.uk

Childline childline.org.uk

Bullying UK bullying.co.uk

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