



Exmouth Swimming and Life Saving Society Anti-Bullying Policy (adapted from Wavepower 2020-2023).

Statement of Intent

Exmouth Swimming and Life Saving Society are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our society. Members or parents should know that it will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

We are a TELLING society. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the welfare officer or any committee member.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding goggles/floats, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber – the misuse of digital technology to bully a person through messages that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation.

- Disablist – bullying of members who have additional needs and disabilities.

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. Swimmers who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Our society has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

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

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- says he/she is being bullied
- is unwilling to go to club sessions
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- feels ill before training sessions



- comes home with clothes torn or swimming equipment damaged
- has possessions go “missing”
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- is frightened to say what’s wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

In more extreme cases

- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

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

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to the welfare officer or a member of the committee or ring Swim Line ASA/NSPCC.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to Swim England for advice
3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly

6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

7. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution.

Recommended Society Action

If the society decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation they should follow the procedure outlined below.

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails/is not appropriate a person appointed by the Chairman should meet with the parent and child alleging bullying to get details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, and these should be agreed by all as a true account.
3. The same person should meet with the alleged bully and parent/s and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed.
4. Any further evidence should be sought from any witnesses or other means.
5. If bullying has, in their view, taken place the swimmer should be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the bullying continues.
6. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
7. In some cases the parent of the bully or bullied swimmer can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The Committee should



monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.

6. All coaches involved with both swimmers should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

In the case of adults reported to be bullying swimmers under 18

1. Swim England should always be informed and will advise on action to be taken.
2. It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a teacher or coach, child protection awareness training may be recommended.
3. More serious cases may be referred to the police, social services or judicial complaints procedure.

Guidelines and strategies to support an anti-bullying policy

The changes of bullying happening in a club can be greatly reduced if there is a general atmosphere where members are valued and cared for. The following strategies which are embodied in the Swim England Code of Ethics supports our society's attempt to prevent bullying:

- Encourage an ethos of mutual respect of difference throughout the club
- Give positive encouragement and promote the value of self and others
- Raise awareness of all to the possible cause and effect of bullying
- Make it clear that bullying will not be tolerated and is unacceptable, but that both victims and bullies will be given the necessary support
- Enable swimmers, coaches and teachers

to understand that no form of bullying be it physical, verbal or emotional will be tolerated.

- Enable members to feel confident that their concerns will be listened to and taken seriously.
- Publicise Swim Line and the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline.

Next Review date May 2022