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## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our swimmers so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is **unacceptable** at Heath Town Swimming Club. If bullying does occur, all swimmers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening should contact the Club Welfare Officer, Committee member and Coach.

### Objectives of this Policy

- All club officers, teachers and coaches, swimmers and parents should understand what bullying is.
- All club officers, teachers, coaches and volunteers should know what the Club policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All swimmers and parents/carers should know what the Club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a swimming club we take bullying seriously. Swimmers and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

### 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, tormenting, threatening gestures.
- **Physical:** Any form of physical violence, intimidating behaviour, theft of the intentional damage of possessions. This includes hitting, kicking and pushing.
- **Racist:** Bullying based on ethnicity, skin colour, language, religion, or cultural practices.
- **Sexual:** Unwelcome sexual advances or remarks that are intended to cause offence, humiliation, or intimidation. This could also include pressure to send images of a sexual nature.
- **Homophobic:** Discrimination based on sexuality and/or gender identity.
- **Verbal:** Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- **Cyber:** Cyber bullying is the misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or group, through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation.
- **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 factors surrounding the way someone looks or dresses, hobbies and interests, 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. Bullies need to learn different ways of behaving.

**HTSC WILL RESPOND PROMPTLY AND EFFECTIVELY TO ISSUES OF BULLYING.**

### 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:

- doesn't want to attend a swimming class/training session
- changes their usual routine



- 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
- continually feels ill when due to attend the swimming club
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

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

### Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to Welfare Officer or another member of the committee.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by the Welfare Officer and the ASA informed.
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come into a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, 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.

### Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
- If possible, the swimmer and his/her bully (bullies) will be reconciled.
- After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

### Prevention

We will use the KIDSCAPE methods for helping children to prevent bullying.

Heath Town Swimming Club acknowledge the help of Kidscape in this matter ([Kidscape.org.uk](https://www.kidscape.org.uk))