

## *Haringey Borough Swimming Club*

### **Anti Bullying Policy**

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all members so they can swim, support and participate in an atmosphere that supports learning and development. Bullying, be it verbal, physical, emotional, retaliatory or reactive will not be tolerated within the club.

If bullying does occur, all swimmers or their parents should be able to report the incident and know that it will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Tackling bullying is the responsibility of everyone at the club and as such, all members, parents and coaches will be expected to ensure that this policy is adhered to. Coaches, teachers, committee members, poolside helpers, swimmers and parents should understand what bullying is, take allegations of bullying seriously and act to report it.

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

#### **What is bullying?**

Bullying is a deliberate act performed to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. It can cause considerable distress and harm to children and can prevent a victim reaching their full potential. It is equally harmful amongst adults.

Bullying can be:

Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text or MSN messages (cyber bullying), tormenting e.g. hiding goggles and other kit, threatening gestures, criticising or causing humiliation.

Physical - punching, pushing, kicking, scratching, nipping or any other use of violence.

Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gesturing.

Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or homophobic comments.

Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours or teasing.

#### **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 or anyone at the club who is bullying needs to learn different ways of behaving. HBSC 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 HBSC's policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All swimmers and parents should know what HBSC's policy is on bullying, and what they should 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.

## **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 or 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.

All reports of bullying should be reported directly to the coach, the Welfare Officer, an HBSC Committee member or Swimline. If reported to a coach or committee member, the matter should be forwarded by them to the Welfare Officer who will follow up to ensure that action has been taken. Reports should be taken seriously and responded to quickly. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to the ASA for advice.

## **Procedures:**

1. Report bullying incidents to the club welfare officer (Rachel Herring on [r.herring@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:r.herring@mdx.ac.uk) or 07931635227) or a member of the coaching staff or committee or ring Swimline 0808 100 4001.
2. A report of bullying received by a coach, teacher or committee member must also be forwarded to the Welfare Officer
3. The Welfare Officer will follow up to ensure that the matter has been dealt with by the appropriate person and will report back to the monthly committee meetings about any reports of bullying and the action taken.
4. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to the ASA for advice.
5. Parents will be informed and asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
6. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
7. The bullying behaviour, or threats of bullying, will be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
8. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
9. If this fails and the bullying is seen to continue, HBSC will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution.

*Updated May 2009*