



## **Statement of intent**

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

## **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 (e.g. threatening gestures, hiding floats/bags on poolside or in the changing room),
- Physical - any non-accidental physical contact hitting in the pool or changing area,
- Racist - racial taunts, gestures,
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments,
- Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality,
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing,
- Cyber - All areas of the internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities.

## **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. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

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

## **Objectives of this Policy**

- All club officers, teachers and coaches, swimmers and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All club officers, 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 they should do if bullying arises.
- As a club we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will 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:

- Is frightened of walking to or from the club.
- Doesn't want to go on the club bus.



- Changes their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to the swimming 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 to the club.
- Training and competition level drops off.
- Comes home with clothes torn or swimming equipment damaged/lost.
- 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 the Welfare Officer, coach, teacher or another club officer.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by that person and referred to the Welfare Officer if he/she is not already aware.
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to 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. If bullying is found to have occurred on the "balance of probabilities" then appropriate action will be taken including an attempt to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour – (See ASA Behaviour Contract Template).

## Outcomes

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise.
2. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
3. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
4. 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 KIDSCAPE methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of club rules;
- signing a behaviour contract; and/or
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters.

## **Help Organisations:**

**Swimline** - 0808 100 4001

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline 0845 1 205 204 - (Mon-Fri, 10am - 4pm)

Childline- 0800 1111 Child Power Leaflet available from [jenni.dearman@swimming.org](mailto:jenni.dearman@swimming.org)

**Child Power** online via the ASA website [www.swimming.org](http://www.swimming.org)

**Parentline Plus** - 0808 800 2222

**Youth Access** - 020 8772 9900

**Bullying Online** - [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

Visit the Kidscape website [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) for further support, links and advice including downloads

- Advice for parents
- Advise for teachers/professionals
- Children who bully
- Stop bullying
- You can beat bullying
- Preventing bullying
- Preventing racist bullying

And details of the ZAP training scheme - a free course to young people who have been affected by bullying.

This policy is taken from the ASA Wavepower documentation. The ASA acknowledge with gratitude the work of KIDSCAPE in helping in the development of this policy.