



BMSS Anti-bullying Policy

This policy has been modelled on the anti-bullying guidance provided by Kidscape. Please visit www.kidscape.org.uk for more information.

Statement of intent

BMSS is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can learn to swim or train in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at all of our affiliated organisations. If bullying does occur, all members should be able to speak out and feel reassured 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 welfare officer, coach, teacher or another officer or employee of the organisation.

Objectives of this policy

- All officers, teachers, coaches, members and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All officers, teachers and coaches should know what the organisation's policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All members and parents should know what the organisation's policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- All organisations should take bullying seriously. Members 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 repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace, and comes in many different forms:

Bullying can include:

- Verbal: Name calling, persistent teasing, mocking, taunting and threats.
- Physical: Any form of physical violence, intimidating behaviour, theft or the intentional damage of possessions. This includes hitting, kicking and pushing.
- Emotional: Excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, setting people up and spreading rumours.



- **Cyber:** Cyber bullying is 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.
- **Racist:** Bullying based on ethnicity, skin colour, language, religion or cultural practices.
- **Homophobic:** Discrimination based on sexuality and/or gender identity.
- **Sexual:** Unwelcome sexual advances or remarks that are intended to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation. This could include pressure to send images of a sexual nature.
- **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, but is not limited to, factors surrounding the way someone looks or dresses, hobbies and interests, family 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. Members of the organisation who are bullying others need to learn to behave more appropriately.

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

Signs and symptoms

Although a child may not necessarily explicitly state that they are being bullied, they may still display signs or behaviours that indicate he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these signs and be prepared to investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from the organisation.
- Doesn't want to go on the club bus.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to the 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.
- Starts to drop in their level of training or competition.
- Comes home with clothes torn or equipment damaged/lost.



- Asks for money or starts stealing money (in order to pay a bully).
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is bullying siblings or other children.
- Stops eating or has less of an appetite.
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.
- Is afraid to use the internet or their mobile phone.
- Is nervous or jumpy when a message is received.
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

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

Procedures

- Report incidents of bullying to the Welfare Officer, coach, teacher or another officer or employee of the organisation.
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents are to be recorded by that person and referred to the Welfare Officer if he/she is not already aware.
- In serious cases, parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted.
- The bullying behaviour, or threats of bullying, must be investigated and the bullying must be stopped quickly.
- If bullying is found on the 'balance of probability' to have taken place, then appropriate action will be taken. This includes attempting to help the bully/bullies to change their behaviour.

Outcomes

- The bully/bullies may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
- If possible, the members will be reconciled.
- After the incident(s) 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.
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters.

Other helpful organisations:

SwimLine: 0808 100 4001

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline direct: 0808 800 5000 (open 24 hrs a day - calls are free)

Kidscape Parent Advice Line: 020 7823 5430 (Mon-Wed, 9.30am-2.30pm - excluding bank holidays)

ChildLine: 0800 1111

Youth Access: 020 8772 9900 or visit www.youthaccess.org.uk

Family Lives: (formerly Parentline Plus) 0808 800 2222 or visit www.familylives.org.uk

BullyingUK: (part of Family Lives) www.bullying.co.uk

www.childline.org.uk

www.bullying.co.uk

Visit the Kidscape website www.kidscape.org.uk for further support, links, advice and downloads.

Child Power Leaflet: download from Policies section of bmswimsquad.org.uk

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