



City of St Albans Swimming Club

Anti-Bullying Policy

The City of St Albans Swimming Club follow the guidelines in the ASA Child Protection Policy on bullying procedures.

Statement of intent

The City of St Albans Swimming Club want all members to feel they are in a friendly club which makes them feel safe and cared for so they can swim and train in a relaxed and happy way. We are a TELLING club which means that:

IF WE KNOW BULLYING IS OCCURRING WE TELL THE CLUB WELFARE OFFICER OR ANY COMMITTEE MEMBER (or the coach/teacher or parent if preferred, who will in turn tell the Club Welfare Officer) so they can deal with it.

What is bullying?

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can be:

- Verbal - Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Emotional - Being unfriendly – sending hurtful text messages, cyber bullying, tormenting (e.g. hiding goggles/floats, using threatening gestures), asking for money.
- Physical - Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, throwing equipment or any use of violence.
- Racist - Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual - Unwanted physical contact or any comments which make you feel uncomfortable in a sexual way including homophobic comments.
- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality.

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts and no one deserves to be hurt – everyone should be treated with respect. Swimmers who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

THE CITY OF ST ALBANS SWIMMING CLUB WILL RESPOND TO BULLYING PROMPTLY AND EFFECTIVELY

Object of this policy

- To ensure that all committee members, coaches, teachers, members, swimmers, and parents have an understanding of what bullying is.
- To ensure all committee members, teaching and coaching staff know what the club policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.

- All members, swimmers and parents know what the club policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.

As a club we take bullying seriously. Members, swimmers and parents will be supported when bullying is reported and all reports will be treated in a confidential manner.

BULLYING MUST NOT AND WILL NOT BE TOLERATED

Signs and symptoms:

A child may show they are being bullied by physical signs or by behaviour. Adults should investigate if a child:

- Says they are being bullied
- Is unwilling to go to club sessions
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Falls 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 night mares
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

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

Procedures:

If you are being bullied or suspect that someone else is being bullied you must report the incident either to the club welfare officer at welfare@costaasc.org or by ringing Swim line – (0808 100 4001). Alternatively you can tell your coach/teacher who will in turn inform the club welfare officer at or any Committee member.

Action taken:

1. Bullying is reported
2. Parents informed and asked to meeting
3. Bullying behaviour will be investigated and stopped
4. An attempt will be made to make bully (or bullies) change their behaviour
5. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue disciplinary action will be taken

Club action on bullying

1. An attempt will be made to get those involved together, and see if a simple action like an apology will solve the problem.
2. If this is not appropriate or possible a small panel comprising of the welfare officer and at least two other members of the committee will meet with the child who claims they are being bullied and their parents. Minutes will be taken to ensure there are no misunderstandings and will be signed and agreed as a true account by the child.
3. The same group of people will meet with the alleged bully and their parents to tell them of the accusations and to give them a chance to give their own views. Minutes will be taken to ensure there are no misunderstandings and agreed as a true account by the child.
4. If bullying is deemed to have occurred the following action(s) will be taken:
 - The bully will be warned and put on notice of further action – i.e. suspension or expulsion.
 - The club will monitor the situation to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
 - The coaches/teachers involved with all parties will be kept informed of the progression and outcomes of these meetings.

Other additional actions may include:

- The parties may be asked to attend a reconciliation meeting.
- The parents of the bully or bullied swimmer may be asked to attend training sessions for a given period of time.

If the reported case involves adults bullying swimmers under 18 then:

1. The ASA will be informed and advice taken on possible action.
2. Child protection awareness training will be recommended if appropriate.
3. Serious cases will be referred to the police, social services or judicial complaints procedure.