

# **FORRES BLUEFINS SWIMMING CLUB**

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Revised – 2 Mar 2014



### **AIM**

Forres Bluefins ASC aspires to be a club where swimmers are treated with respect and feel safe:

- a) in the pool
- b) in the changing rooms
- c) at any social event or trip organised by the Club
- d) at galas held by other swimming clubs
- e) when using social media

### **DEFINITION**

Bullying takes place in many forms and should not be tolerated. It may include:

- a) physical abuse e.g. kicking, hitting and gestures
- b) verbal abuse e.g. name-calling, sarcasm and ridicule
- c) emotional abuse e.g. spreading rumours, exclusion from friendship circle and blackmail
- d) extortion e.g. gaining money from threatening behaviour
- e) derogatory or hurtful remarks on social media posted by other members or by text messaging or other instant messaging.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Club will do all in its power to create an ethos where all members (swimmers, coaches, committee members, poolside helpers and parents) understand that bullying is never acceptable behaviour.

Swimmers, coaches and parents/guardians have a role to play in the prevention of bullying.

#### **Swimmers are expected to:**

- a) respect the individual right of all members
- b) be sensitive to the feelings of fellow swimmers
- c) have a caring manner to Club members
- d) immediately report any incidents of bullying, knowing that wherever possible all information will be dealt with confidentially

Swimmers should report incidents to their Coach, parents/guardian or any senior swimmer they feel they can approach

#### **Coaches are expected to:**

- a) treat all swimmers with respect
- b) avoid the use of sarcasm or ridicule
- c) emphasise the need for lane discipline and respect for fellow swimmers
- d) deal with any incidents quickly and effectively

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### **Parents/guardians are expected to:**

Contact the coach or head coach as appropriate should they witness any behaviour they consider to fall into the definitions above. A committee member is also a suitable contact if a swimmer is being bullied or is suspected of bullying behaviour, as defined above.

### **REPORTING PROCEDURE**

The following procedure is to be followed on receiving a bullying allegation against a child swimmer (a similar procedure may be adopted for adult members):

1. Details are to be noted regarding the actual incident, who was present, at which session, at whom the allegation is against and who has been affected. Particular attention is to be paid to the circumstances surrounding the incident and which poolside helpers / coaches or parents are present.
2. If appropriate, the coach is to be consulted. At this stage the situation may be resolved with the coach talking to the individual(s) concerned, depending on the seriousness of the circumstances and the history of similar behaviour by the individual(s).
3. Should the situation warrant further investigation the President, Vice President or secretary are to be informed as well as the Child Protection Officer. Unless it is directed otherwise then the club should proceed as below.
4. If appropriate, the coach or other suitable official is to discuss with the complainant, in the presence of the parent(s) the exact circumstances of the incident and establish the level and history of any bullying. The coach may wish to invite an additional suitable committee member and may also ask that notes are made.
5. If appropriate, the coach or other suitable official is to discuss the event with the alleged bully in the presence of their parent(s). Another official may be present, as above.
6. If appropriate, the circumstances are to be discussed at a committee meeting. This should be scheduled within a suitable time frame to permit a quick resolution. If, because of the individuals involved, a full committee meeting is not appropriate then a management meeting is to be held with unaffected members to discuss the alleged incident and its resolution.
7. In all circumstances, the President, Vice President, secretary or CPO is to write to the parents of the alleged bully and the complainer to set out the action the club is to take. The following actions may be deemed appropriate in resolving bullying incidents:
  - a) A written warning to the parents of the bully setting out what behaviour is unacceptable and that future occurrences will result in suspension or expulsion.
  - b) Suspension from sessions for a period of time consistent with the seriousness of the bullying.
  - c) Immediate expulsion from the club.