



## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **Introduction**

Our club is staffed by coaches and teachers who are not only qualified and expert in their own field but who work with children and young people to develop their skills and enable them to fulfil their potential in competitive swimming.

Nevertheless, as in any organisation, misunderstandings can from time to time arise which may lead to a parent wishing to express concern. A concern is not a complaint and should not be treated as such by the parent or the club. Only a very small number of concerns raised by parents need to be investigated using the formal procedure.

If the nature of the complaint affects a child's welfare, reference must be made to Swim England's Wavepower document, which has been adopted as the club's child protection policy, and to the club's Welfare Officer. The Welfare Officer can be contacted at [welfare.chasesc@gmail.com](mailto:welfare.chasesc@gmail.com).

Any concern should always be raised with your child's designated teacher or coach in the first instance where every effort should be made to resolve the difficulty. When concerns are addressed and resolved there should be no need for a formal complaint. An initial request for action or an enquiry is not a complaint. However, failure to respond could give rise to a complaint.

Chase Swimming Club aims to deal positively with all complaints. The club views complaints as an opportunity to re-examine its policies, procedures and services and, through feedback to the complainant aims to show that it is responsive to their concerns.

This procedure is for use by parents and carers. Reasonable adjustments could be made at any stage in order to assist the process if the person making the complaint has a disability.

If you are worried about something concerning your child at Chase Swimming Club you should first ask to discuss the difficulty with your child's teacher or coach. The contact details for each coach can be found on our website and on our notice board at Cheslyn Hay Leisure Centre. Contact can be made with Learn to Swim Teachers through the Learn to Swim Co-Ordinator, whose contact details are also available on our website and on our notice board at Cheslyn Hay Leisure Centre.

It is expected that the majority of concerns will be dealt with outside of swimming sessions, so as to minimise disruption to teachers, coaches and other swimmers during pool time. Please ensure that there is time for a calm and private discussion.

### **Formal Complaints Procedure**

The formal procedure should only be followed after informal discussions with the teacher or coach have been exhausted.



Any parent wishing to make a formal complaint should contact the club Chair, who may be contacted at [chair.chasesc@gmail.com](mailto:chair.chasesc@gmail.com). The name and other contact details of the Chair may be found on our main notice board at Cheslyn Hay Leisure Centre and on the club website. Details of the complaint should be provided in writing.

The complainant will be contacted by the Chair usually within 5 working days of receipt of the formal complaint. The complainant will be invited to meet with the Chair (or another member of the Chase Committee, as designated by the Chair) to discuss their concerns at a mutually convenient time. The Chair reserves the right to invite other members of the teaching and coaching team, or of the Chase Committee, if they feel that this will aid the discussions. The complainant will be advised in advance of the attendees at the meeting. The complainant must advise the Chair in advance of anyone else that will be accompanying them, including their swimmer.

If a longer timescale is required, this will be explained and justified to the complainant.

### **At the Meeting**

The Chair will hear the views of the complainant in more detail. They will be given the opportunity to speak to the Chair without the presence of the person(s) about whom they are complaining.

An agreed written record of the discussion will be made for all parties present at the meeting to sign as an accurate record. A copy will be shared with all parties. All discussions and written records will be kept confidential amongst those directly involved.

The Chair will take any necessary action to consider the complaint, which may include meeting with any other party that is the subject of the complaint, and anyone else who is a witness to an incident or who may have information relevant to the complaint. No meetings with swimmers under the age of 18 will take place without the consent and presence of a parent.

After hearing the complaint and considering the relevant facts, the Chair will make a decision whether or not to uphold the complaint. The decision should be conveyed to the complainant in writing within 5 working days of the meeting and should clarify that all relevant factors have been taken into account.

The Chair will decide whether any general actions or changes to practice may need to be made as a result of dealing with the complaint, and if so shall discuss with the teaching and coaching staff, via the Head Coach and/ or Learn to Swim Co-Ordinator. The Chair will also decide whether any general outcomes, changes to practice or learning points need to be shared with the club committee. No confidential details relating to any specific complaint should be shared with the teaching and coaching staff or the committee, unless it is necessary for the conclusion of the Chair's investigation of the complaint.



## **Right of Appeal**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Chair's response, they must contact the Chair to set out in writing the reasons why they are not satisfied with their response. In this circumstance an external mediator may be invited to support resolution. This person must be acceptable to both parties and will be agreed in advance of any meetings being scheduled. Staff or volunteers within Swim England/ASA are appropriate persons to act as mediators.

A mediator has no legal powers. Their role is to listen to both sides, help define the issue, review actions taken to date and to offer balanced and impartial advice to enable the issue to be resolved.

The mediator will keep any discussions confidential. If it is considered helpful they may hold separate meetings with parties involved in the situation.

The mediator must keep an agreed record of any meetings that are held and of any advice given.

When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between the complainant and the Chair will be held. Other individuals may be invited as deemed appropriate by the mediator.

The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice will be used to reach this conclusion.

A record of this meeting, including the final decision on action to be taken, will be made with everyone present at the meeting signing the record and receiving a copy.

The signed record confirms that the procedure has concluded.

## **Swim England**

If a parent remains dissatisfied with the outcome of an internal club process there is an option to raise a formal complaint with Swim England over a dispute or breach of Code of Conduct.

This decision should be taken after full discussion with Swim England. The formal complaint form can be requested by emailing [signposting@swimming.org](mailto:signposting@swimming.org).

There is a charge of £50 for registering a formal complaint with Swim England.

**Approved by Chase Swimming Club Committee on 24 July 2019**