



Leinster Open Sea Anti-Bullying policy statement

LOS works with children and families as part of its activities in assisting Swimming Clubs in the organising of Open Sea Races in the Leinster Area.

Leinster Open Sea agrees to follow the guidelines advised by our Governing Body Swim Ireland and provide the best possible environment for all young people involved in open water swimming.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to prevent bullying from happening between children and young people who are a part of our organisation and or take part in our activities.
- To make sure bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support, they need.
- to provide information to all staff, volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying.

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of **Leinster Open Sea**, including Committee members, volunteers and staff supplying services for the Sea Racing Calendar.

Separate documents set out:

- our code of behaviour for children, young people and adults
- our policies and guidelines for preventing and responding to bullying and harassment that takes place between adults involved with our organisation.

What is bullying?

Bullying is defined by the Department of Education and Skills guidelines as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. All forms of bullying will be addressed. Everybody in the club/organisation has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying. Bullying can comprise of online as well as offline behaviour.

Bullying can include:

- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc...
- Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation or the continual ignoring of individuals.
- Posting of derogatory or abusive comments, videos or images on social network sites.
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, sectarianism, sexual comments, suggestions or behaviour.
- Unwanted physical contact.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policies and guidelines that seeks to protect children in Ireland following The *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport* as outlined by Sports Ireland.

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind.
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and operate in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- bullying causes real distress and affects a person's health and development.
- in some instances, bullying can cause significant harm.
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

We will seek to prevent bullying by:

- developing a code of behaviour that sets out how everyone involved in our organisation is expected to behave, in face-to-face contact and online when participating in our activities.
- putting clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place.
- practising skills such as listening to each other.
- respecting the fact that we are all different.

Responding to bullying

We will make sure our response to incidents of bullying considers:

- the needs of the person being bullied
- the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour
- needs of any bystanders.
- our organisation as a whole.

Diversity And Inclusion

We recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity.

We will be proactive about:

- seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference
- increasing diversity within our staff, volunteers, children and young people
- welcoming new members to our organisation.

Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.

- Children being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development.
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying.
- Sanctions for those bullying others that involves long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, will be avoided.