



2018/2019

Manchester Swim Club Team Handbook

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MANCHESTER SWIM CLUB MISSION STATEMENT

“MSC is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to fostering competitive swimming for youths 6-18 years old with the goal of building swimmers self-confidence, self-esteem, good sportsmanship, and a healthy lifestyle.”

Our program is intended to develop good fitness habits both physically and mentally. We promote good sportsmanship, team spirit, and a strong work ethic. Each swimmer’s success is measured on an individual basis as well as how they contribute to the team as a whole. We count on and expect the participation of every swimmer and parent to maintain the level of success that our team has displayed since our program began many years ago.

We hope that your involvement with Manchester Swim Club will be a positive and rewarding experience for your swimmer and your family.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Manchester Swim Club offers a full year competitive swim program.

- Recreational (REC) Team – September to mid-February
- Continued Practice Programs – Mid-February to May
- USA Short Course Season – September to March
- USA Long Course Season – May to July

MSC is a competitive swim program. While we are committed to teaching and improving stroke technique, we are also preparing swimmers to participate in competition. **MSC is not an option for swimmers who are not looking to take part in swim meets. Meet participation is required during the fall/winter season.**

MANCHESTER SWIM CLUB STRUCTURE

Manchester Swim Club is run by a Board of Directors. The Board is elected every other year to serve a 2 year term (elections are held in even number years). The Board is responsible for the day to day operations of the Club.

MSC STAFF

- Head REC Coach / Head USA Coach: Ron Anderson
- Assistant REC Coach / Assistant USA Coach: Sean Anderson
- Assistant REC Coach/ Assistant USA Coach: Kelly Chmielewski
- Assistant REC Coaches: Anna Garvey
- Team Coordinator: Diane Smyth

MSC BOARD

- President: Dave Garvey
- Vice-President: Susan Parker
- Secretary: Kelly Smagacz
- Treasurer: Valerie Vetere
- USA Liaison: Diane Smyth
- Meet Manager: Valerie Vetere

Contact information for our Board members can be found on the team website.

TEAM STRUCTURE

Swimmers are assigned to a practice team based on their ability to maintain certain practice expectations, including, but not limited to: experience, ability and commitment level. Assignment is NOT determined by age. Coaches place swimmers on practice teams in order to provide each swimmer the opportunity to have a challenging, but safe, practice environment. It is important to note that while we use the term “practice team”, Manchester Swim Club is a single team. Your swimmer’s placement on a practice team does not determine which meets your swimmer will be asked to participate in.

Practice team assignments are determined at tryouts for new swimmers. For returning swimmers, the practice team assignment will be communicated in advance of the registration process. Swimmers can be changed from the Junior practice team to the Senior Practice team (or vice versa) during the course of the season. Fees will be adjusted at the time of the change.

- **JUNIOR TEAM** – 4 practices offered per week. Each practice is one hour. Geared towards 12 and under swimmers or older swimmers with very little experience.
- **SENIOR TEAM** – 6 practices offered per week. Each practice is 1 ½ hours. Geared towards swimmers with more experience. Swimmers as young as 10 may be asked to be on the Senior team if they demonstrate a high level of endurance, stroke technique and commitment.
- **USA TEAM** – Swimmers attend the same practices as REC swimmers but compete in additional meets. Within the USA team, swimmers are still assigned to Junior, Senior or Senior Level II practice teams. USA swimmers need to participate on the REC team however REC swimmers are not required to join the USA team.

TEAM PRACTICE POLICIES

As guests of Manchester High School, it is of utmost importance that the following policies are adhered to. Failure to do so can result in the loss of our practice venue.

GENERAL PRACTICE POLICIES

- Swimmers and parents must use the designated entrance when arriving to practice. The entrance is on Brookfield Street. From Brookfield Street, when facing the school, the entrance is the set of doors all the way to the left of the building (the football field will be directly to your left). If the doors are locked, please wait for someone to open them. Please do NOT use the center entrance or right side entrance.
- Swimmers and parents should arrive 5-10 minutes before their designated practice time. If the pool door is closed, swimmers and parents must wait quietly in the hallway until the coach arrives and gives permission to enter the pool area.
- Swimmers at the 5:00 practice **CANNOT** use the locker room at the beginning of practice and must be in their suits and ready to swim upon arrival.
- Parents of new or very young swimmers may enter the locker room if a swimmer needs assistance, but once your swimmer is comfortable with the routine, please refrain from entering the locker rooms unless absolutely necessary. Please respect the privacy of the other swimmers.
- Parents are NOT allowed on the pool deck at any time during practice. If you need to speak with a coach, please make an appointment to do so before or after practice. Please do not approach the coaches during practice.
- Parents that are staying at practice with non-swimming children must keep them away from the pool area. Children are NOT allowed to be in the hallway. Non-swimming children **MUST** be accompanied by an adult at all times and must remain in the spectator stands.

GENERAL PRACTICE POLICIES (CONTINUED)

- Parents that are dropping off swimmers must pick up their child immediately upon the completion of the practice. Parents of pre-teen children must come into the pool area to pick up their swimmers. If a swimmer must leave practice prior to the scheduled end time, the coach must be notified and the parent must pick up their swimmer from the pool area.
- We allow our parents to remain in the pool stands during practice, as a courtesy. We ask that you do not try to speak to your child or get their attention during practice sessions. The coaches expect full attention from the swimmers during this time.

SWIMMER PRACTICE POLICIES

Swim team practice is a vital component to the success of each swimmer. During competition, a swimmer's ability and achievement can be recognized, but it is practice that allows a swimmer to develop the skills that lead to success. Having this in mind, the following team practice policies have been established.

- Swimmers are not required to attend every practice but SHOULD attend the majority of practices assigned to their team. Failure to do so may result in him/her not being able to compete in meets. You are not required to report an absence, however if your swimmer will be out of practice for more than a few days, please contact the Team Coordinator.
- All swimmers are required to be at practice and ready to swim at the start of practice. Swimmers that are late and do not have a valid excuse may not be able to participate that day. Once the lanes are full and swimmers are keeping up a pace, late swimmers will disrupt practice by needing a lane to warm-up in.
- **SWIMMERS MUST PRACTICE AT THEIR DESIGNATED PRACTICE TIME. JUNIORS CANNOT SWIM AT THE SENIOR PRACTICE, NOR CAN SENIORS ATTEND JUNIOR PRACTICES. NO EXCEPTIONS!**
- Coaches can advance a Junior swimmer to the Senior Team during the course of the season if the Junior swimmer is meeting the Senior criteria. Senior swimmers can also be moved back to the Junior team if not demonstrating the endurance, ability, or commitment to the senior practices.
- Swimmers must wear a swim cap and goggles to practice.
- Boys wearing drag suits must wear another swimsuit underneath.
- Girls must wear one piece practice suits.
- Lack of respect towards coaches and/or other staff members, adults and fellow swimmers or poor attitude during practice or meets may result in dismissal from practice and possibly the team.
- Swimmers should bring a practice suit, swim cap, goggles, a towel, and dry clothes to practice.

COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES

- The coaches are responsible for placing swimmers in practice groups.
- The coaches will provide stroke improvement training for swimmers. Each group's practices are geared toward the goals and abilities of that group.
- The coaches will assign swimmers to practice lanes based on ability and endurance. Lanes are NOT assigned to swimmers based on gender, age group or acquaintances.
- Coaches will make the final decision regarding the events a swimmer will compete in at REC meets. They will be placed where the coaches' feel is appropriate for the swimmer and for the benefit of the team.
- At meets, the coaches will conduct and supervise procedures for the team. After each race, the coaches will make every effort to offer constructive criticism regarding the swimmer's performance.
- The building of each relay is the responsibility of the coaches, who will factor in the following variables:
 - Attitude of the swimmer
 - His or her practice performance and dedication
 - His or her ability to perform under pressure
 - His or her best time in the event
- Coaches will be available to discuss swimmers progress with parents (before, or after practices).

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES / ROLES

The organization, coordination, and success of Manchester Swim Club are incumbent upon the participation of all team members and their families. Active participation of ALL FAMILIES is of utmost importance. If all MSC families help, everyone will have sufficient opportunity to watch and cheer for their swimmer during swim meets.

PARENT WORK ASSIGNMENTS

Parent volunteers are critical to running swim meets. Each family should expect to have one adult person work every meet. Every attempt is made not to assign families to work at every meet, however sometimes this is unavoidable, so please be prepared to participate. An email will be sent out a few days in advance of each meet with work assignments. It is YOUR responsibility to find a replacement if you cannot fulfill your assignment. Please do not ask the MSC staff to find a replacement for you. **If you do not show up for your work assignment or send a replacement, a \$25.00 work fine will be charged to your account. Failure to pay the fine will result in late fees. This policy applies to REC and USA swim meets.**

Our team's success is dependent upon your participation and willingness to be involved.

WORK ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

- **TIMERS** – Parents that are given the job assignment of using the stopwatches to time swimmer's races at a meet. Job usually lasts for ½ of our REC meets. (Parents will have the opportunity to learn to time during time trials which will be held one night during practice hours).
- **RUNNERS** – Parents that are given the job assignment of collecting the event cards from the timers and getting them to the scoring table. Job usually lasts for ½ of our REC meet.
- **LANE HELPERS** – Parents that are given the job of helping the younger kids line up correctly at the starting blocks. Job usually lasts for ½ of the meet.
- **CONCESSIONS** – Parents that have been given the job of running the concession stand at home meets. This job may last for ½ or the entire meet. Because the concession stand is in the hallway, workers take turns going to the pool stands to see their swimmers events.
- **SCORERS**- Parents who keep track of the score during the meet. Job lasts for the entire meet.
- **MEET MARSHALS** – Parents who are assigned the job of watching over the swimmers during swim meets, giving them their event cards and letting them know when to go to the blocks for their events. This job lasts for the entire meet.
- **PLACE JUDGES** – Parents that are given the job of listing the order in which swimmers finish a race. This job may last for ½ or the whole meet.
- **OFFICIALS** – Parents that have the qualification and are given the job of overseeing the swimmers races and calling disqualifications. Officials may also be asked to start each race. This job lasts for the entire meet.

PARENT GUIDELINES

During the season please take the following into consideration:

- **PLEASE DON'T TRY TO COACH YOUR SWIMMER** - Leave coaching to coaches. This includes pre-race psyching, motivation, after race critiquing, setting goals, enforcing additional cross training, etc. The communication between the coach and the swimmer is very important. It is imperative that the coach has the swimmer's full attention at all times. It is for this reason that, during practice, we ask parents not to seek your child's attention, thus allowing the coaches to do their job.
- **SUPPORT THE COACH** - Your coaches are the experts. They need your support for everyone to "win". The coaches will be happy to speak to you about any concerns or suggestions that you have. But please do not try to get their attention during practice sessions or during meets. The appropriate time to speak with the coaches is before or after practice, or you can make an appointment through the Team Coordinator.
- **SUPPORT THE PROGRAM** – While we always appreciate your comments and suggestions, please know that the rules and procedures put in place are for the benefit of your swimmers and the team as a whole.
- **BE YOUR CHILD'S BIGGEST FAN** - Support your child unconditionally. Do not show your disappointment when your child performs poorly. The first thing most swimmers do after a race is to look for you in the stands. Regardless of the outcome of the race, show your swimmer that you know they did the best they could do on that given day.
- **SUPPORT AND ROOT FOR ALL SWIMMERS ON THE TEAM** - Foster teamwork. Your child's teammates are not the enemy. When they go faster than your child, your child now has a wonderful opportunity to improve. Teach your child that they should not become angry with another swimmer that had a faster race. The object of the game is the same for all swimmers.
- **DO NOT BRIBE OR OFFER INCENTIVES** - Your job is not to motivate. Leave this to the coaching staff. Bribes will distract your child from proper race concentration.

PARENT GUIDELINES (CONTINUED)

- **TAKE YOUR CONCERNS AND PROBLEMS DIRECTLY TO THE COACH** - If you have a problem with the coach, do not go to other parents to discuss it. Go straight to the coach involved. Talking behind the coach's back will **not** get you what you want.
 - **UNDERSTAND AND DISPLAY APPROPRIATE MEET BEHAVIOR** - Remember your child's self-esteem and race performance is at stake. Be supportive and cheer but always be appropriate.
 - **MONITOR YOUR CHILD'S STRESS LEVEL AT HOME** - Keep an eye on your swimmer to make sure he is handling stress effectively in the various activities in his life.
 - **MONITOR EATING AND SLEEPING HABITS** - Be sure your child is eating the proper foods and getting adequate rest.
 - **HELP YOUR CHILD KEEP HER PRIORITIES STRAIGHT** - Help your child maintain a focus on schoolwork, relationships and the other important things in life besides swimming. Also, if your child has made a commitment to swimming, help her keep the priorities around this in mind.
 - **"REALITY TEST" FOR YOUR CHILD** - If a swimmer comes out of the pool with a personal best time and a last place finish, help him understand that this is a "win". Help him keep things in proper perspective including losses, disappointments and failures.
 - **KEEP SWIMMING IN PERSPECTIVE** – Swimming should not be larger than life for you. If your child's performances elicit strong emotions, keep these away from him. Remember your relationship will continue with your children long after their swimming days are over. Keep your goals and needs out of the pool.
- BE AN APPROPRIATE LIAISON TO THE COACH** - Keep the coach informed as to how your child is responding to the experience (when appropriate). If your child is having trouble with something that happened in the pool or with something the coach said, help the child deal with it and if necessary, speak directly with the coach.

RECREATIONAL SWIM MEETS

Our REC team is a member of the CCWSL (Central Connecticut Winter Swim League). The season runs from September through mid-February, with meets typically beginning in mid-November. Dual meets (2 teams) are held at home or at one of our competitor's pool (Glastonbury, Windsor, Wethersfield, Farmington).

We hold what are known as "A" meets, "B" meets and "A/B" meets. It may be helpful to equate "A" as Varsity and "B" as Junior Varsity. The practice team your swimmer participates on DOES NOT determine the type of meet he/she will swim in. The CCWSL has time standards that are set at the start of each season. These standards are called "A Times". Once a swimmer has swum a time faster than the "A Time", he/she can no longer swim that event in a "B" meet.

"B" meets are only for 12 and under swimmers.

"A" meets will consist of swimmers from all age groups and participation is determined by the coaches. A swimmer does not have to have an "A Time" to participate in an "A" meet. Coaches will need additional swimmers to fill events and make relay teams.

Do not assume that if your swimmer participates in "B" meets that he/she will not be asked to participate in "A" meets.

SWIMMERS ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND ALL MEETS THEY ARE ASSIGNED TO. If your swimmer cannot participate in a meet, the swimmer must notify the coach in person.

In order for your swimmer to be eligible to swim at Championship meets your swimmer **MUST** attend at least 3 meets that they are assigned to. **SWIMMERS MUST BE AT THE ENTIRE MEET FROM WARM-UPS TO THE ENDING CHEER TO HAVE IT COUNT TOWARD THEIR NUMBER OF QUALIFYING MEETS.**

GENERAL MEET INFORMATION

SWIMMERS WILL NOT KNOW WHAT EVENTS THEY ARE IN UNTIL THE DAY OF THE REC MEET.

Once swimmers arrive at the meet, they will find out which events they will be swimming. They can tell parents which events they are in, or, if we are able to prepare the meet enough in advance, we will post the events for the parents (this doesn't always happen because we don't always have enough time before the meet.)

ORDER OF EVENTS: You can find the order of events for both "A" and "B" meets on our website.

www.manchesterswimclub.org Click on the "REC MEET SCHEDULE" page. At the top of the page you can print out the order of events for B meets or A meets. The order for A meets is the same as A/B meets.

NUMBER OF EVENTS ALLOWED: Swimmers can swim up to 2 relays and 2 individual events **OR** up to 3 individual events and 1 relay.

RELAYS: Your swimmers may be placed on an A, B, or C relay. You shouldn't be concerned if your swimmer is in a B or C relay and you feel they should be in an A relay, or any other combination. Our coaches place kids in relays according to where they feel the team will earn the most points. For example, the four fastest swimmers may be split among 2 relays, to try to get 1st and 2nd, rather than putting the 4 fastest swimmers all in one relay.

MEET SIGN-UPS

About a week 1 ½ before each meet, an email will be sent out with a list of swimmers that are expected to attend. A sign-up deadline will be given at that time. Parents will sign swimmers up by completing an online sign up form. Swimmers must have a valid excuse for not attending a meet. Once again, **SWIMMERS ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND ALL MEETS THEY ARE ASSIGNED TO.** If the Team Coordinator does not receive an email response by the meet deadline sign-up date, the swimmer will NOT be entered into the meet.

METHOD OF SCORING FOR REC MEETS AND AWARDS

Points are awarded as follows:

- Relays: 1st place = 8 points; 2nd place = 4 points; 3rd place = 2 points
- Individual events: 1st place = 5 points; 2nd place = 3 points; 3rd place = 1 point

Only the first heats of each event are scored. You can never sweep an event (get all points). If the opposing team has a relay or individual in the heat that is not disqualified, they get the point(s) for third place. If not, third place points are not awarded.

Ribbons are given for each event for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. Because only the first heat in each event scores, only the first heat will receive place ribbons. Technically, a swimmer in heat 2 can get a faster time than a swimmer in heat one. The heat 2 swimmer still will not score or receive a ribbon. Typically this only happens at the beginning of the season. Once swimmers establish base times, coaches will have a better idea of where to place them in the meets.

Improvement ribbons will be given for improved times during the season, so all swimmers have the ability to receive ribbons, even if they don't score in a meet. Swimmers that come in 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in an event, and also get a best time in that event, will only receive a place ribbon, however there will be a best time sticker or star that indicates a best time on the place ribbon.

Times from dual meets come from the middle time from the 3 timers in each lane. When a card comes to us with only 2 times written on it, we average those times.

REC CHAMPIONSHIP MEETS

At the end of the season, swimmers that have attended the required number of meets will qualify to swim at either “A” or “B” Championships. Championship meet participants include all member teams in the league.

Team points are awarded for the top 12 places in each event to determine the League Champion. Medals are given to 1st through 6th place overall finishes in each event and ribbons are given to 7th through 12th place in individual events. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place relays receive medals.

Swimmers will be placed in “A” or “B” Championships depending on how many “A” or “B” times they have.

A swimmer with all “A” times can only swim at “A” Championships. A swimmer with all “B” times can only swim at “B” Championships. A swimmer with both “A” and “B” times cannot swim the “A” events at “B” Championships. Coaches will determine which Championship meet that a swimmer with both “A” and “B” times will swim at. Swimmers CANNOT swim at both “A” and “B” Championships.

SWIM MEET POLICIES

It is important to discuss the following meet policies with your swimmer(s).

- SWIMMERS NEED TO ARRIVE AT THE POOL 15 MINUTES BEFORE THE WARM-UP TIME.
- At our Home meets, swimmers will sit in the IOH pool area (the small pool located behind our practice pool). PLEASE BE SURE SWIMMERS BRING DECK CHAIRS.
- In addition to deck chairs, swimmers should also arrive to the meet with their team suit, cap, goggles (a spare pair of goggles is a good idea), 2 towels, sweat shirt and pants or something dry to stay warm in during events, HEALTHY snacks (no cookies, candy, French fries, pizza or other heavy foods). Recommended light snacks are veggies, power bars, pretzels, bagels, orange slices, etc. All swimmers should stay well hydrated and drink lots of fluids. Gatorade, PowerAde and water are all recommended. NO GLASS BOTTLES PLEASE!!!
- **At HOME meets, please be sure your swimmers remain in the IOH area at all times** unless it is time for their events. Meet Marshals need to be able to locate them, or they will miss their events. SWIMMERS SHOULD NOT BE IN THE SPECTATOR STANDS AND SHOULD NOT BE AT THE CONCESSION STAND. Please purchase concessions for your swimmer, before or after the meet.
- Swimmers needing to use the restrooms need to tell a Marshal before they leave the IOH area.
- **SWIMMERS MUST STAY OUT OF THE IOH POOL.** This means no feet, no hands or any other body parts. Our meets get very crowded and we are fortunate to be able to have another area for our kids to sit. It is the policy of the school that we do not allow our swimmers to use the IOH pool. If we lose this privilege, we lose a large portion of our spectator seating to swimmers.

UNLESS YOU ARE A WORKING VOLUNTEER OR A SWIMMER, YOU SHOULD NOT BE ON THE POOL DECK OR IN THE IOH AREA OR THE LOCKER ROOMS AT ANY TIME.

Please do not try to coach your swimmers from the stands. Please let the coaches do their job. If the coaches are telling the swimmers one thing and you are telling them something different, your swimmers will end up confused and anxious before their events.

PLEASE DO NOT USE FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY. The timers are watching for a flash at the start of each event. Camera flashes can confuse the timers and the swimmers. This can cause your swimmer to be disqualified.

To rally team spirit, it is important for the swimmers to stay until the end of the meet and participate in the team cheer. They MUST clean up their area before leaving.

In between races, swimmers are asked to rest and stay warm. All energy is to be stored up and used in competition.

SWIMMER CODE OF CONDUCT

(adapted from Laurel East Hartford YMCA)

MSC abides by a strict Code of Conduct governing all coaches, swimmers and parents. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to ensure that all those associated with MSC treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Conduct is a condition of membership. All members of MSC and their parents agree to abide by the Code of Conduct and agree to be subjected to the consequences of violating the code.

All enforcement decisions made by the MSC Board are final. No refunds will be granted to swimmers dismissed from the team for their or their parents' violation of the Code of Conduct.

Swimmers:

- Respect you teammates, coaches, officials and opponents at all times.
- Give 100% effort at each practice and meet.
- Support and encourage your teammates.
- Display good sportsmanship at all times, both on and off the pool deck.
- Don't be afraid to make a mistake; that's part of learning.
- Listen to and learn from your coaches.
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
- Have fun!

All:

- Any conduct, including abusive language and/or gestures, racially insensitive remarks, damage to property or belongings, or any other conduct that reflects poorly on you, Manchester High School, and/or MSC is deemed to be unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This rule applies to all swimmers, parents, siblings and guests at all times when at meets and/or practices, on the pool deck, in the locker rooms or any other associated facilities.
- The MSC coaching staff and the MSC Board will deal with unacceptable conduct at their sole discretion, imposing warnings, suspension or expulsion, as they deem appropriate. ANY SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FROM THE TEAM BASED ON VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT WILL NOT BE ACCOMPANIED BY ANY REFUNDS.

Required by USA Swimming; policy adapted from USA Swimming

Action Plan of the Manchester Swim Club to Address Bullying

PURPOSE

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Manchester Swim Club (the “Club”) and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. The Club is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, board member or athlete/mentor.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CLUB’S BULLYING POLICY AND ACTION PLAN

- To make it clear that the Club will not tolerate bullying in any form.
- To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
- To make it known to all parents, swimmers and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
- To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
- To spread the word that the Manchester Swim Club takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. The Manchester Swim Club has adopted the USA Swimming Code of Conduct regarding bullying for both our Rec and USA programs. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying in 304.3.7. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

- causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member’s property;
- placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
- infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
- materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC).

REPORTING PROCEDURE

An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things:

- Talk to your parents;
- Talk to a Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
- Write a letter or email to the Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
- Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff.

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we **STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT** using the following steps:

- Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
- Separate the kids involved.
- Make sure everyone is safe.
- Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
- Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
- Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

If bullying is occurring at our club or it is reported to be occurring at our club, we address the bullying by **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED** and **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED** using the following approach:

FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED

First, we get the facts.

- Keep all the involved children separate.
- Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
- Listen without blaming.
- Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.
- It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyber bullying. Collect all available information.

Then, we determine if it's bullying.

- There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.
- Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
- To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:
- What is the history between the kids involved?
- Have there been past conflicts?
- Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.

MANCHESTER SWIM CLUB BULLYING POLICY (CONTINUED)

- Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?
- Remember that it may not matter “who started it.” Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.
- Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.

Support the kids who are being bullied

- Listen and focus on the child. Learn what’s been going on and show you want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
- Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:
- Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching practice groups, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.
- Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between the Club and parents. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.
- Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.

Address bullying behavior

- Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
- Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
- Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:
- Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.
- Other times kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.
- Involve the kid who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:
- Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
- Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Club, or for others in your community.
- Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
- Avoid strategies that don’t work or have negative consequences:
- Zero tolerance or “three strikes, you’re out” strategies don’t work. Suspending or removing from the team swimmers who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Swimmers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.
- Conflict resolution and peer mediation don’t work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.
- Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.

Support bystanders who witness bullying.

- Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening.
- Be a friend to the person being bullied;
- Tell a trusted adult – your parent, coach, or club board member;
- Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. "Let's go, practice is about to start."
- Set a good example by not bullying others.
- Don't give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

PAYMENT POLICIES

- All payments should be made payable to "Manchester Swim Club" or "MSC".
- Payments not received by specified deadlines will incur a \$25.00 late fee, with additional \$25.00 late fees added for each month that the account is past due.
- Failure to make payment within 4 weeks of a due date will result in swimmer dismissal from practice until payment including late fee is paid.
- In the case of financial hardship only, if a payment cannot be made by the due date, please contact the Team Coordinator prior to the due date. An extended payment schedule can be tailored to your needs.
- Payments should be given to or mailed to the Team Coordinator.
- Rec fees and USA fees can be made in installments. Payment schedule is on our website.
- When mailing payments, please indicate on your check, or with a note, what your payment is for. (For example – Rec team \$100.00 / USA team \$50.00 / Swim caps \$12.00). If you give your payment to the Team Coordinator at the pool, please be sure to enclose it in an envelope with your swimmer's name, your name and what the check is for.

All payments should be mailed to the team coordinator, Diane Smyth.

62 Willowbrook Road

Cromwell, CT 06416

From time to time the team coordinator will be present at the pool to collect payments. To avoid unnecessary late fees, please plan to have all payments mailed and received by the due date.

COMMUNICATION

In order to successfully run our program you need to check your email daily. All MSC information is conveyed by email. Your main contact with MSC is through the Team Coordinator. Some of the information you will receive by email is as follows.

- Practice schedule changes and cancellations
- Meet information
- Meet entry requests
- Policy changes and enforcements
- Communications from the coaches
- Important deadlines
- Payment reminders
- Fundraising information
- Team Apparel Sales
- Lost and found articles
- All other important information regarding the swim team.

Please remember that all deadlines must be adhered to.

We do not accept late meet entries. If you don't sign up for REC and/or USA meets by the deadlines, your swimmer will NOT be entered into the meets.

- If payments are not made by the specified deadlines, late fees will be applied.
- If you do not sign up for specific programs by the given deadlines, your child will lose out on the opportunity to participate.
- REMINDER PHONE CALLS WILL NOT BE MADE.

COURTESY COMMUNICATIONS

- **WEBSITE** – Almost all of MSC's information can be found on our website, www.manchesterswimclub.org. Please familiarize yourself with the website. All team information, fees, meet details and other important information as well as team news and photos can be found on the website.
- **TEXT ALERT SYSTEM** - As a courtesy, MSC also has a text alert system in place. Families wishing to be a part of this system can give the information needed on your swimmer's registration form. Text messages are only sent out for last minute practice schedule changes, cancellations or other last minute important information. Please do not depend on the text system for all information. Because some of our members pay extra for text messages, we try to keep texting to a minimum.
- **POSTINGS** - Some information, such as meet details, meet entries and apparel sales, may be posted on the wall by the door at the pool.

COMMUNICATING WITH MSC STAFF

The MSC staff is always on hand to discuss any issues that you may have. We welcome suggestions and ideas and we are available to discuss concerns and answer any questions that arise.

- **Coaches** - As stated previously, coaches will be happy to speak with you before or after practice, or by appointment. Please do NOT disrupt practice by speaking to the coaches during that time. Practice or swimming issues should be discussed with the coaches or can be relayed through the Team Coordinator.
- **Team Coordinator** – All administration questions should be emailed to the Team Coordinator. The Team Coordinator can also help with any swim related questions that you have or will direct you to the appropriate person or resource. The Team Coordinator handles all meet information, meet entries, team finances, and the website. All team related emails will come from the Team Coordinator. You can also speak with the Team Coordinator by phone or by appointment at the pool during practice hours. All fees will be made payable to MSC and paid to the Team Coordinator.
- **Board of Directors** - Our Board of Directors can also answer any questions or concerns that you have. They can be reached by email, phone or by appointment at the pool during practice hours.

USA SWIMMING

USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for competitive swimming in the United States. USA Swimming was conceived in 1978 with the passage of the Amateur Sports Act, which specified that all Olympic sports would be administered independently. USA Swimming Headquarters office was established in Colorado Springs, Colorado in 1981 and is located at the Olympic Training Center.

ORGANIZATION OF USA SWIMMING

- International - The international federation for the aquatic sports is the Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA). USA Swimming is affiliated with FINA through United States Aquatic Sports (USAS), made up of the four aquatic sports-swimming, synchronized swimming, diving and water polo.
- National - USA Swimming is a Group A member of the United States Olympic committee (USOC) and has voting representation in the USOC House of Delegates.
- Zones - We are divided into four separate zones - Central, Eastern, Southern and Western. Each zone elects two representatives to the national Board of Directors.
- Local - Within the United States, there are fifty-nine (59) Local Swimming Committees (LSCs). Each LSC is responsible for administering USA Swimming activities in a defined geographical area and has its own set of bylaws under which it operates. Our Local Swimming Committee is called "Connecticut Swimming, Inc."

MANCHESTER SWIM CLUB USA TEAM

Our fall/winter USA Short Course team runs from September through March. This is a more competitive team and provides more competitions than the REC team. Meets are held throughout the state and we participate in some out of state meets. Meets are typically held on weekends, but some meets begin on Thursday or Friday evenings.

Parent and swimmers decide which meets and which days of each meet that the swimmer will attend, as well as the events to swim. You can choose to swim only 1 day of a multi-day meet if desired.

Swimmers participate in age group events: 8 & under, 9 & 10, 11 & 12, 13 & 14, 15 and over, and Senior (any age). A swimmer's age is determined by the age they are on the first day of any given meet.

Parents are responsible for entry fees for each meet throughout the season.

Meets have swimmers from multiple teams from CT and other states and sometimes other countries.

USA swimmers can progress to more competitive meets - as far as Zone Age Group Meet, Sectionals, Nationals, Olympic trials and the Olympics!

Manchester Swim Club (MSC) is one of over 60 member clubs of CSI. Each year about 30 to 40 MSC swimmers participate in USA Swimming. This is a great showing for our club, and we hope even more will consider registering this season.

SHOULD MY CHILD PARTICIPATE IN USA SWIMMING?

Yes, absolutely! Why you might ask? Competitions, competitions, competitions! This year we will be competing in several statewide meets as well as Regional, Age Groups, and Senior Championships. An advantage of swimming in a USA meet is that each meet is run very much like a Championship Meet, with several teams participating instead of only 2. The meets can be very competitive for our more seasoned swimmers, and newer swimmers will gain additional experience by competing in meets. Attending practice is one way to improve strokes, turns, starts, finishes and eventually improves times, but an equally important tool in bettering all of these things is to compete more often.

Parents may be hesitant to sign their child up for USA Swimming, if they feel their child doesn't have enough experience, however, USA swim meets are geared toward swimmers of all abilities. Each event is set up so that all swimmers are in a heat with swimmers that have comparable times.

Several USA meets will be offered as well as Championship meets. We have chosen sites throughout Connecticut at some really great pools (High Schools, Colleges and Universities). You can decide to go to all or pick only a few.

There is an additional fee required to be part of the USA team. Swimmers are charged MSC/USA fees, a USA registration fee and families will have escrow accounts, referred to as a "kitty fund" to pay for events at each meet. Each event usually runs between \$6.00 and \$8.00. Families will be requested to replenish their "kitty fund" as it is depleted. For your convenience, payments can be made in installments. Our fees and payment schedule can be found on our website. (www.manchesterswimclub.org).

Important Note: If you are transferring to MSC from another team and your swimmer participated in USA Swimming with that team you need to fill out a Transfer/Release form. You can find the on-line form on the Connecticut Swimming Website. www.ctswim.org.

The Team Coordinator will be available by email, by phone, and during some practice sessions to answer questions regarding USA Swimming. Registration forms are available through the Team Coordinator. New USA swimmers will also need to provide a copy of their birth certificate to the Team Coordinator.

SIGNING UP FOR USA MEETS

All USA meet sign-ups are done by email. USA meets fill up VERY quickly, so our team needs to send our entries in at the very beginning of the season. Our Team Coordinator will send the meet information to you a couple of days before the meet sign-up deadline. You MUST respond by the deadline as to whether your swimmer will or will not attend. At that time, you will also send the event entries that your swimmer wishes to participate in. Meet sign-up instructions will be in the email. It is important to read the entire email, as each meet may have different criteria, instructions, and qualifications required to enter. The Team Coordinator will meet with all new USA families to discuss our USA procedures in detail.

PLEASE NOTE, IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO CHECK YOUR EMAIL DAILY FOR USA NEWS, CHANGES TO MEETS, DEADLINES, ETC. ALL USA COMMUNICATION IS DONE BY EMAIL.

PARENT WORK ASSIGNMENTS AT USA MEETS

Before each USA meet, we are given work assignments from the hosting team. The Team Coordinator will split up the assignments among the parents of the participating swimmers. All parents are expected to do their share. Typically, assignments are split into one hour sessions per worker per day. If you are given an assignment and cannot work, it is YOUR responsibility to find someone to take your place. Please do not ask the MSC staff to find a replacement. **If you do not show up for your work assignment or send a replacement, a \$25.00 work fine will be charged to your account. Failure to pay the fine will result in late fees.**

SWIMMING TERMINOLOGY GLOSSARY

- **MR – MEDLEY RELAY** - Made up of 4 swimmers of the same gender in the same age group in which each swimmer does 1 or more laps of a different stroke in the order: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, freestyle. This is usually the first event in our REC meets.
- **FR – FREESTYLE RELAY** – Made up of 4 swimmers of the same gender in the same age group in which each swimmer does 1 or more laps of freestyle. This event is usually the last event of our REC meets.
- **IM – INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY** – Individual event in which swimmer does 1 or more laps of each stroke in the order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle.
- **DQ – DISQUALIFICATION** – A swimmer may be disqualified during a meet event by an official for several reasons, the most common of which are a false start (leaving the starting block before the starting beeper is sounded), touching with only one hand in the butterfly or breaststroke, taking more than one stroke underwater in the breaststroke, turning over on the stomach during the backstroke turn or finish, or executing the kick in the butterfly of breaststroke incorrectly. If a swimmer is disqualified, the swim does not count towards points or awards and will not be considered a legal usable time for the swimmer.
- **EVENT CARDS** – During REC meets, a card is given to swimmers prior to his/her event that tells the swimmer what he/she is swimming, what lane to go to and what heat he/she is in. When the swimmer gets to the block, they will give the card to the timer. The timers will document their times from their stopwatches on the event card. Runners will then pick up the event cards after each race, and deliver them to the scorer's table. Event cards are not used at USA meets. The timers are given event sheets beforehand to keep track of the swimmers times. USA Swimmers will be told what they are swimming and what lane and heat they are in, by the coach.
- **HEAT** – A single round of an event having two or more rounds. Since there are usually 6 lanes in a pool, there are usually 6 or less swimmers in a "heat".
- **SWEEPS** – In the winter REC league, when the swimmers from the same team finish 1st, 2nd, and 3rd it is considered a "sweep". In the REC league, one team can only score the first two swimmers.
- **BULLPEN** – A designated area at a swim meet where event cards are given to swimmers before their events. The bullpen is also the area where swimmers wait before their events. At MSC home meets (held at Manchester High School), the bullpen area is the IOH pool, which is the smaller pool adjacent to our practice/competition pool.
- **YARD POOLS AND METER POOLS** -
 - Long Course – (LCM – long course meters) Meets swam in a 50 meter pool.
 - Short Course – (SCY - short course yards) Meets swam in a 25 yard pool.
 - Short Course Meter – (SCM – short course meters) Meets swam in a 25 meter pool.
 - Winter REC team races are always held in a 25 yard pool. In the winter, USA meets are usually held in a 25 yard competition pool. The USA winter season is referred to as the "Short Course" season.
 - Occasionally in the winter, and always during the summer, USA meets are held in 50 meter competition pools. The summer USA season is referred to as the "Long Course" season.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

NEW SWIMMER TRY-OUTS

New swimmers are required to try out for the team at the beginning of the season. For the safety of the swimmer, he/she must be able to complete a lap of freestyle (crawl stroke) swimming in our 25 yard pool, using the proper breathing technique. We work on improving strokes, but we do not offer swimming lessons. Candidates must be able to swim to be considered for the team. New swimmers that do not qualify for the team will be refunded any money that has been paid. New swimmers will also have a two week trial period, during which time a full refund will be granted if a swimmer decides he/she no longer wishes to participate, or if a coach feels that the swimmer should not continue. There will be NO refunds after the two week trial period.

TEAM APPAREL

At the beginning of the season, MSC will offer team swimsuits and team swim caps. Swimmers are not required to purchase team apparel but are encouraged to do so, for the purpose of enhancing team spirit and unity. Swimmers are required to wear swim caps and goggles during practice and at meets. We offer swim caps with the swimmer's last name and HIGHLY recommend that you purchase them. During a meet there can be over 100 of our swimmers on deck. It will be much easier to find your child if they have a name on their cap. It will also help the coaches and meet marshals to spot your swimmers when getting them ready for their meet events.

If you do purchase team swimsuits, they are ONLY to be worn at meets. Your swimmer should NOT wear them to practice. Racing suits should be worn tight, and the more they are worn, the quicker they will stretch out. A stretched out, baggy suit will create drag and prevent the swimmer from swimming as fast as they are able.

We will have practice suits, goggles, practice caps and other swim items on sale during the first couple weeks of practice. You can also purchase swim items on-line from Metro Swim Shop or Action Accents. Both links are on our website.

Additional MSC logo wear will be available during the season. We will offer sweatshirts, sweatpants, t-shirts, etc. before the holidays for those that would like to purchase them as gifts.

TIME TRIALS

At the beginning of the season, usually in October, we hold a mock meet, referred to as "time trials" during one of our junior practices. This gives our new and less experienced swimmers a chance to see what it is like to compete in a race, before an actual meet. This also gives the coaches a good idea of where to place swimmers in individual and relay events.

During time trials we ask that experienced parents help our new parents learn how to time swimmers events. We ask that all new parents try timing during time trials. It is very easy, but it will be much less stressful for you to learn at time trials rather than at an actual meet. Time trials are usually only held for the junior practice team, but some of our newer, older swimmers may be asked to attend.

SWIM PRACTICE ETIQUETTE

Swimmers are assigned to practice lanes with swimmers of similar ability to avoid swimmer pile-ups. However if a swimmer is swimming at a pace faster than the swimmer ahead of them, they should tap that swimmer on the foot. The leading swimmer should let the faster swimmer go by. Each swimmer should have the opportunity to swim at a fast, steady pace.

REMEMBER, STUFF HAPPENS...

Even our best swimmers will make mistakes, or have bad swim days. No one can get a best time every time they dive into the pool. Swimmers get DQ'd all the time, and the world doesn't end. Making mistakes is part of the learning process. Swimmers will occasionally miss their events. When this happens, please do not blame the parent volunteers or the coaches. We have a very large team, and it's difficult to keep track of where everyone should be during a hectic swim meet. Volunteers and coaches do their best to be sure that younger swimmers especially, are where they are supposed to be, but once the swimmer is familiar with the routine, it is ultimately up to them to be sure they are aware of when their events are going to take place. Please remember that when a swimmer misses an event, gets dq'd, or doesn't get a time that they hoped for, they are already feeling upset and disappointed. If that swimmer looks for you up in the stands and sees you with an expression of anger or disappointment, it can negatively impact their self-confidence and affect the outcome of upcoming events. Please know that most swimmers are swimming the best they can on any given day.

TAPERING FOR CHAMPIONSHIP MEETS

During the swim season, swimmers are working hard at practice, getting ready for Championship meets. You may notice, especially with older swimmers, that their fastest swim times don't come as easily during regular weekly meets. Your swimmer needs to know that they should not be discouraged by this. It means that they are working hard during practice and their body is not ready for peak performance.

In the weeks before Championships, the coaches will gradually reduce the amount and volume of their practice workouts. This gives the body a chance to get rested. The reduction in volume of work will not result in decreased performance ability. All performance factors are maintained at this important period of time. Most swimmers demonstrate their best times after a full taper at Championship meets. The coaches may also opt for a mini-taper for swimmers attending an important meet during the season. Tapers may differ for certain age groups and from swimmer to swimmer. Healthy eating habits should be maintained during that time, as calories won't be burned off as quickly as when the swimmers are practicing all out. It is also very important for the swimmer to stay well rested during the taper period.

END OF YEAR BANQUET

All swimmers are recognized for their hard work and achievements throughout the season at the end of the year banquet. Additional information will be provided towards the end of the season.