

Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can participate in football in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all club members or parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING club. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Club Welfare Officer or any committee member.

What is bullying?

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace, and comes in many different forms:

- Verbal: Name calling, persistent teasing, mocking, taunting and threats.
- Physical: Any form of physical violence, intimidating behaviour, theft or the intentional damage of possessions. This includes hitting, kicking and pushing.
- Emotional: Excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, setting people up and spreading rumours.
- Cyberbullying: The misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or a group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation. Examples of cyberbullying include:
 - Abusive comments, rumours, gossip and threats made using digital communications and/ or technologies - this includes internet trolling.
 - Sharing pictures, videos or personal information without the consent of the owner and with the intent to cause harm or humiliation.
 - Hacking into someone's email, phone or online profiles to extract and share personal information, or to send hurtful content while posing as that person.
 - Creating dedicated websites that intend to harm, make fun of someone or spread malicious rumours.
 - Pressurising someone to do something they do not want to such as sending a sexually explicit

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Individuals who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. The impact upon a child or young person can be devastating and in some cases affect all aspects of their life, in extreme circumstances it can lead to suicide threats or even attempts.

This club has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this policy

- All club members, coaches, officials and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All club members, officials and coaching staff should know what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All players and parents/carers should know what the club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.



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- As a club we take bullying seriously. Players and parents/carers should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and indicators

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Says he or she is being bullied.
- Is unwilling to go to club sessions.
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Feels ill before training sessions.
- Comes home with clothes torn or training equipment damaged.
- Has possessions go 'missing'.
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the 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 nightmares
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.

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

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to the CWO or contact the CFA Designated Safeguarding Officer.
2. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
3. If necessary and appropriate, the Police will be consulted.
4. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
5. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
6. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution.

Recommended club action

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation, they should follow the procedure outlined below.

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails/is not appropriate, a small panel (made up from the chairman, CWO, secretary, committee members) should meet with the parent/carers and child alleging bullying to get



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details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.

3. The same three members should meet with the alleged bully and parents/carer and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed by all as a true account.
4. If bullying has in their view taken place, the individual should be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the bullying continues. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
5. In some cases the parent of the bully or bullied player can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
6. All coaches involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

In the case of adults reported to be bullying anyone within the club under 18:

1. The CFA Designated Safeguarding Officer should always be informed and will advise on action to be taken where appropriate.
2. It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a team manager, official or coach, The FA's Child Protection and Best Practice awareness training may be recommended.
3. More serious cases may be referred to the Police and/or Social Services.

Prevention:

1. The club will have a written constitution, which includes what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members of which the anti-bullying policy is one part
2. All club members and parents will sign to accept the constitution upon joining the club.
3. The CWO will raise awareness about bullying and why it matters, and if issues of bullying arise in the club, will consider meeting with members to discuss the issue openly and constructively.



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