



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

At the CLUB/COMMUNITY TRUST we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for everyone so that they can participate in football in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our Club. If bullying does occur, players and parents should 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 a DSO or any senior member of staff.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intent to hurt another person.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, sending hurtful text messages, tormenting (e.g. hiding property, threatening gestures)
- Physical: pushing, kicking, punching or any use of violence
- Racist: taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or suggestive comments
- Homophobic: focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

Why it is important to respond to bullying

- Bullying hurts; no one deserves to be a victim of bullying
- Everyone has the right to be treated with respect
- Individuals who bully need to learn a different way of behaving

The CLUB/COMMUNITY TRUST has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All coaches, officials, players, parents/carers should have a clear understanding of what bullying is
- All coaches, officials, players, parents/carers should know the CLUB/COMMUNITY TRUST's policy on bullying and what action to take if bullying occurs

- We take bullying seriously: players and parents/carers should be assured that they will receive full support if bullying is reported
- All coaches, officials, players and parents/carers should have an appreciation of the signs and indicators of bullying.

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 investigate further if a child:

- Says he or she is being bullied
- Is unwilling to attend sessions
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Feels ill before sessions
- Comes home with clothes or equipment regularly torn or damaged
- Has possessions that 'go missing'
- Asks for money or steals (to pay the bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above and appears frightened

Or, in more extreme cases, if a child:

- Develops a stammer
- Cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Displays bullying tendencies towards other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

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

Procedures

- Report all incidents to the Designated Safety Officer or a senior member of staff
- Parents/carers should be informed and will be asked to meet to discuss the problem
- If necessary and appropriate the Police will be consulted
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- An attempt will be made to help the bully/bullies recognise and change their behaviour
- If mediation fails and the bullying continues the CLUB/COMMUNITY TRUST will initiate a formal investigation and possible disciplinary action.

- In some cases parents/carers of the bully or bullied player will be asked to attend training sessions if appropriate. The CLUB/COMMUNITY TRUST will monitor the situation for an agreed period to ensure that the bullying has stopped.
- All coaches involved with both the bully and the player being bullied should be made aware of the concerns and the outcomes of the process.

In the case of adults reported to be bullying anyone in the club under the age of 18

- The DSO should always be informed and will advise on the appropriate course of action. This may include initiating an investigation and possible disciplinary action.
- In most cases where the allegation is made regarding a team manager, official or coach, the FA's Safeguarding Children Workshop will be recommended to the individual
- More serious cases will be referred to the Police and/or Social Services.

Policy to be reviewed: Annually or on the occasion of a major reported incident, organisational or legislative change.

Date of next review: July 2019