



District Sports Anti Bully Policy

Bullying is recognised and defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or sectarian remarks, threats, name-calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of his peer group). The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm).

Bullying is not an accepted behaviour towards anyone at ***District Sports*** by the child, coach, volunteer or parent.

Anyone found to be bullying others will be dealt with seriously both in regards to the behaviour exhibited and the reasons for the behaviour.

The possibility of people being bullied will be discussed openly within the Club and all young people and staff/volunteers informed of both the Clubs' views on bullying and ways in which bullying can be prevented / stopped. It should be emphasised that anyone can be the victim of bullying and that being or feeling bullied is not a sign of weakness and does not make the victim a less valuable person.

Action to be taken if a child states they are being bullied:-

- Child to be given time to say how they are being bullied and reassured they are right to tell.
- Adult / Children's Officer to keep the young person informed of their proposed action and to take into account child's feelings and perspective.
- The child's parents can be informed of your concerns and response.
- Chairperson / Leader of the club to be informed of any incident of bullying so that policies and practices can be reviewed on a regular basis.

The Individual

- Respect every child's need for, and rights to, a play environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect for every individual's feelings and views.
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special.
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.
- Ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained and displayed for all to see.
- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned. All forms of bullying will be addressed. Bullying can include:
 - physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc

- name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation and the continual ignoring of individuals
 - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, sectarianism
 - sexual comments and /or suggestions
 - unwanted physical contact
- Children from ethnic minorities, children with a disability, young people who are gay or lesbian, or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and may well be targeted.
 - Everybody has the responsibility to work together to stop bullying – the child, the parent, the coach, the youth worker, the sport's official.
 - Appropriate forums should be established within the organisation, including children, parents, youth workers and other agencies, to address, monitor and stop bullying.
 - Commitment to the early identification of bullying and prompt, collective action to deal with it.
 - Policy and practice should be agreed through consultation with clubs, parents and children.
 - Children should be encouraged to take a role in stopping bullying in their community.
 - Policy and practice should be reviewed regularly in the light of changing needs and changes adopted by other agencies (e.g. schools).
 - Coaches will have access to training on bullying.

Support to the Child

- Children should know who will listen to and support them.
- Any advice and assistance should be given by an appropriately trained and experienced worker.
- Children should have access to Helpline numbers.
- Children should be told what is being recorded, in what context and why.
- Systems should be established to open the door to children wishing to talk about bullying or any other issue that affects them. Barriers to talking need to be broken down to enable children to approach adults.
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported, whether the child being bullied or the child who is bullying.
- 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 involving long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in

front of others, should be avoided. **Support to the Parents/Guardians**

- Parents/Guardians should be advised on local policy and practice about bullying.
- Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the child's parent(s)/guardians.
- Parental/Guardian advice on action will be sought and agreements made as to what action should be taken.
- Information and advice on coping with bullying will be given.
- Support should be offered to the parent(s) including information on other agencies or support lines.