

24: Anti-Bullying

Our club is committed to providing an environment for children that is safe, welcoming and free from bullying. Bullying of any form is unacceptable in our club, whether the offender is a child or an adult. The victim is never responsible for being the target of bullying.

Everyone involved in the club, staff, children and parent/carers, will be made aware of the club's stance towards bullying. Such behaviour will not be tolerated or excused under any circumstances.

The club defines bullying as the repeated harassment of others through emotional, physical, verbal or psychological abuse. Examples of such behaviour are as follows, but not limited to:

Emotional: Being deliberately unkind, shunning or excluding another person from a group or tormenting them. For example, forcing another person to be 'left out' of a game or activity, passing notes about others or making fun of another person, racial or gender abuse.

Physical: Pushing, scratching, spitting, kicking, hitting, biting, taking or damaging belongings, tripping up, punching or using any other sort of violence against another person.

Verbal: Name-calling, put-downs, ridiculing or using words to attack, threaten or insult. For example, spreading rumours or making fun of another person's appearance, racial abuse.

Psychological: Behaviour likely to instil a sense of fear or anxiety in another person.

Preventing Bullying Behaviour

The manager and the staff will make every effort to create a tolerant and caring environment in the club, where bullying behaviour is not acceptable. Staff will discuss the issues surrounding bullying openly, including why bullying behaviour will not be tolerated and what the consequences of bullying behaviour will be.

Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

Despite all efforts to prevent it, bullying behaviour is likely to occur on occasion and the club recognises this fact. In the event of such incidents, the following principles will govern the club's response:

- All incidents of bullying will be addressed thoroughly and sensitively.
- Children will be encouraged to immediately report any incident of bullying that they witness. They will be reassured that what they say will be taken seriously and handled carefully.
- Staff have a duty to inform the manager if they witness an incident of bullying involving children or adults at the club.
- If a child or a member of staff tells someone that they are being bullied, they will be given the time to explain what has happened and reassured that they were right to tell the staff member.

- The individual who has been the victim of bullying will be helped and supported by the staff team. They will be kept under close supervision and staff will check on their welfare regularly.
- In most cases, bullying behaviour can be addressed according to the strategies set out in the Encouraging Good Behaviour policy. The bully will be encouraged to discuss their behaviour and think through the consequences of their actions. Where appropriate, they will be encouraged to talk through the incident with the other person concerned.
- Where bullying behaviour persists, more serious actions may have to be taken, as laid out in the Suspensions and Exclusions policy.
- Where bullying is alleged against a member of staff, the incident will be dealt with in line with the Staff Disciplinary and Grievance policy.
- A member of staff will inform the parents/carers of all the children involved in a bullying incident at the earliest possible opportunity. If appropriate, staff will facilitate a meeting between the relevant parents/carers. At all times, staff will handle such incidents with care and sensitivity.
- All incidents of bullying will be reported to the manager and will be recorded in the Incident Record Book. In the light of reported incidents, the manager and other relevant staff will review the club's procedures in respect of bullying.