

4.3 The BSAC Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying can occur in the best of clubs and should always be acted upon and never be ignored. The following policy is aimed at helping clubs to understand their responsibility to identify and deal with bullying and it provides guidance.

Every child has the right to experience sport in a safe environment free from abuse and bullying. Sports organisations play an important role in creating a positive club ethos that challenges bullying by empowering young people to understand the impact of bullying, how best to deal with it and agree standards of behaviour.

Bullying may be defined as the repeated and the deliberate acts of hurtful behaviour by one or more people, repeated over a period of time and against which it is difficult for the bullied person to defend. Bullying causes hurt to an individual or a group and the damage inflicted by bullying can often be underestimated. Bullying can cause considerable distress to the young person or persons on the receiving end and affect their health and development or in extreme cases cause them significant harm including self-harm.

Kidscape, the first charity in the UK established specifically to prevent bullying and child sexual abuse, believes that protecting children from bullying is key to child development. They define the main types of bullying as:

- Physical - Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and other forms of violence or threats.
- Verbal - Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
- Racist - Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual - Unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.
- Homophobic - Any hostile or offensive action against lesbians, gay males or bisexuals or those perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- Abuse of the vulnerable. For example, children with physical disabilities, on the autism spectrum, or with special educational needs, carers, children who have suffered a death in the family.
- Emotional. Excluding, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation.

Bullying can result in:

- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Shyness
- Poor academic achievement
- Isolation
- Threatened or attempted suicide

Bullying can be by:

- Adult on child
- Child on child
- Parent on child

Examples of bullying in the sport could be:

- The “pushy-parent” whose child does not wish take part in the sport but is made to by the parent who is unable to acknowledge the child’s feelings and wishes.
- An instructor who cannot accept that when a child is unable to perform a task in the sport due to fear or other reasons and is continuously pushes beyond a level of reasonable encouragement.

All forms of bullying will be addressed.

Everybody in the club/organisation has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying.

Bullying can include online as well as offline behaviour.

The club should:

- Recognise its duty of care and responsibility to safeguard all students from harm
- Promote and implement this anti-bullying policy in addition to the BSAC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Seek to ensure that bullying behaviour is not accepted or condoned.
- Require all members of the club/organisation to be given information about, and sign up to, this policy.
- Take action to investigate and respond to all alleged incidents of bullying.
- Encourage and facilitate children and young people to play an active part in developing and adopting a code of conduct to address bullying.
- Ensure that instructors are given access to information, guidance and/or training on identifying and managing bullying.

Each participant, instructor, volunteer will:

- Respect every child's need for, and rights to, an environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect the feelings and views of others.
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special and should be valued.
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.
- Be committed to the early identification of bullying, and prompt and collective action to deal with it.
- Report incidents of bullying they see – by doing nothing they are condoning bullying.

What the CWO should do if bullying is reported

Support to the child

- Children should know who will listen to them talk about bullying or other worries.
- Systems should be established to open the door to children wishing to talk about bullying or any other issue that affects them.
- Potential barriers to talking (including those associated with a child's disability or impairment) need to be identified and addressed at the outset to enable children to approach adults for help.
- Children should have access to Helpline numbers.
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported.
- We will investigate alleged bullying objectively, listening carefully and impartially to all concerned.
- Victims of bullying are supported and will be helped to take part in the BSAC safely and without fear.
- Bullies will be encouraged and helped to stop.
- Bullies will neither be ridiculed nor isolated for long periods.

Support to the parents/carers.

- Parents/carers should be advised on the club/organisation's bullying policy and practice
- Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the child's parent(s)/carers.
- Parents/carers will be consulted on action to be taken (for both victim and bully) and agreements made as to what that action should be.
- Information and advice on coping with bullying will be made available

- Support should be offered to the parent/carer including information on other agencies or support lines.

To manage the concerns raised

- The CWO may wish to arrange a reconciliation meeting, with the alleged bully and bullied young person. Parents and children concerned must first consent for this meeting to be held.
- The meeting can be facilitated by the CWO or another suitable person, acceptable to all parties concerned, who has knowledge and experience of such a process.

AND/OR

If such action is not possible or appropriate the CWO should convene a committee of three Club Officers who will listen to all parties in turn and “form a view” of what happened to consider:

- whether bullying has taken place,
- what action needs to be taken
- how to prevent bullying in future.

AND/OR Contact BSAC LOCS for further advice.

Useful contacts

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

ChildLine: 0800 1111 / <http://www.childline.org.uk>

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.antibullyingalliance.org