East Bierley Community Sports Association

Anti Bullying Policy

07/07/2025

CONTENTS

DOCUMENT CONTROL **3**

1. POLICY STATEMENT **4**

2. WHAT IS BULLYING? **4**

3. WHY IT MATTERS **4**

4. OBJECTIVES **5**

5. RECOGNISING THE SIGNS **5**

6. REPORTING PROCEDURE **6**

7. CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES **6**

8. PREVENTION **7**

9. CYBERBULLLYING **7**

9.1. WHAT IS CYBERBULLYING? 7

9.2. WHY IS CYBERBULLYING DIFFERENT? 8

9.3. HOW CAN IT BE PREVENTED? 8

10. RASCIST BULLLYING **8**

10.1. WHAT IS RACIST BULLYING? 8

10.2. HOW CAN IT BE PREVENTED? 9

11. HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING **9**

11.1. WHAT IS HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING? 9

11.2. HOW CAN IT BE PREVENTED? 9

12. SUPPORT AND CONTACTS **9**

Document Control.

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1. Policy Statement

East Bierley Community Sports Association (EBCSA) is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all participants, across all age groups, abilities, and sports disciplines. Everyone has the right to enjoy sport and physical activity in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

As a provider of facilities, EBCSA supports the safeguarding efforts of all member/partner clubs and facility users. However, clubs are responsible for their own players, staff, and volunteers, and must ensure they adopt and enforce robust anti-bullying practices aligned to this policy.

If bullying occurs, all players, parents/carers, volunteers, and coaches should feel empowered to report it, knowing that it will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly and effectively. EBCSA encourages a culture of openness and expects all its member clubs to be "TELLING" clubs.

2. What is Bullying?

Bullying is the repeated use of aggression or intimidation with the intent to cause harm or distress. It can take various forms, including:

- Emotional – Exclusion, tormenting, threatening gestures
- Physical – Hitting, pushing, spitting, damaging property
- Verbal – Name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours
- Racist – Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual – Unwanted contact, suggestive comments
- Homophobic – Targeting based on perceived or actual sexuality
- Disablist – Targeting individuals with disabilities
- Cyberbullying – Through phones, email, social media, or image misuse

3. Why It Matters

Bullying causes emotional harm and undermines the inclusive environment we strive to create. Everyone deserves respect. Bullies need guidance to change their behaviour. Clubs and users of EBCSA facilities are responsible for responding swiftly and appropriately to any reports.

4. Objectives

- Ensure all participants understand what bullying is
- Provide clear reporting routes and procedures
- Ensure appropriate support for victims and fair action towards perpetrators
- Reinforce that bullying in any form will not be tolerated
- Promote a zero-tolerance approach to bullying across all EBCSA-supported sports
- Clarify that while EBCSA provides the facilities, safeguarding responsibility lies with each individual club and user group operating within them

5. Recognising the Signs

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

- Says he/she is being bullied.
- Is unwilling to go to training sessions or matches, especially if they used to enjoy these activities.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Feels ill before training sessions or matches.
- Comes home with clothes torn or equipment damaged.
- Has possessions go 'missing'.
- Asks for money or starts to steal 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

Or in more extreme cases, if a child:

- Starts stammering
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or otherwise unreasonable
- Stops eating
- Self Harming
- Attempts or threatens suicide or running away

The above signs may indicate other problems, however, bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

6. Reporting Procedure

1. Report concerns to your Club Welfare Officer or another member of your club committee
2. For serious cases, escalate immediately to the sport-specific safeguarding team
3. Inform parents/carers and involve them in resolving the issue
4. Contact Police or Social Services if appropriate
5. Investigate all reports promptly and fairly
6. Support the victim and take steps to change the bully's behaviour
7. If necessary, apply club disciplinary procedures

7. Club Responsibilities

- If the Club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation they should follow the procedure outlined below.
- Consider reconciliation – it may be that a genuine apology can solve the problem.
- If this fails or is not appropriate, a small panel (including the Club Welfare Officer) should meet with the parents/guardians of the child alleging bullying to get details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken which should be agreed by all parties.
- The same panel should meet with the alleged bully and his/her parents/guardians so they can give their views on the allegations. Once again minutes should be taken and agreed.
- If the panel believe that bullying has taken place, the individual should be warned and put on notice that any further incidents may lead to a temporary or permanent suspension from the club. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between the parties is appropriate.
- It may be appropriate for the parents/guardians of the bully or the bullies player to be asked to attend training sessions.
- The Club Welfare Officer and other members of the committee should monitor the situation to ensure bullying does not reoccur.
- All coaches involved with the individuals concerned should be made aware of the situation and what to do if bullying is observed.

In the case of serious bullying or an adult bullying a child then the sport specific Safeguarding Team should be informed. Cases of this nature will be dealt with under the Safeguarding Case Management procedure or may be referred to Police and/or Children's Social Care if appropriate.

8. Prevention

- The Club will have a written constitution/code of conduct, which includes acceptable standards of behaviour for all players, parents/guardians, volunteers and coaches.
- All players, parents/guardians, volunteers and coaches will receive a copy of the constitution/code of conduct upon joining the club or at the start of each season if appropriate.
- The Club Welfare Officer will raise awareness of bullying and why having a robust anti-bullying policy matters, and if issues of bullying arise in the club, consideration will be given to meeting with all players, parents/guardians, volunteers and coaches to discuss the issues openly and constructively – although with no specific reference to individual incidents.
- The Club will display a copy of the each sport's Anti-Bullying Poster and Policy in an appropriate place – more copies are available on request or can be downloaded from the specific sports website.
- All Coaches and other volunteers will be mindful of behaviour that could escalate and constitute bullying

9. Cyberbulllying

9.1. What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is the use of communications technology to deliberately upset someone. This is an extension of face-to-face bullying and should be treated just as seriously. Cyberbullying can take place via mobile phones, emails, internet chat rooms, message boards or instant messaging services.

- Threats and intimidation
- Harassment and stalking
- Defamation
- Rejection and exclusion
- Identify theft, hacking into social media accounts and impersonation

- Publically posting or sending on personal information about another person
- Manipulation

9.2. Why is cyberbullying different?

One of the biggest differences between cyberbullying and face-to-face bullying is that it can be hard to get away from. Young people could be bullied anywhere, anytime – even when they're at home.

- It can reach a vast audience in a matter of seconds
- It has the potential to draw in large numbers of people
- It takes 'repetition' to a different level, with hurtful comments and images being shared multiple times
- It has the potential to impact at any time of day or night
- It can offer a degree of anonymity to the perpetrator
- There are very few children that have not been impacted in some way, either as the perpetrator or the victim
- It's difficult to police and to punish
- There is often some form of evidence (e.g. screen shot, text message).

9.3. How can it be prevented?

- Children's use of technology should be monitored to prevent inappropriate usage.
- Children should be made aware of the repercussions their actions may have what may be seen as joke at one end may not be received as one because the sender cannot see the impact of their message.
- 'Blocking' the bully or removing from 'buddy' lists so that the bully cannot send messages to the individual concerned.
- Advising the individual being bullies not to reply or retaliate.
- Advising children to set their profiles on social networks to 'Private' so only their approved friends have access.

10. Rascist Bulllying

10.1. What is racist bullying?

Racist bullying is motivated by a prejudice against a particular race, nationality or religion. Racist bullying can be physical, emotional, verbal, physical or sexual.

Do not assume that Caucasian children cannot be the victims of racist bullying.

10.2. How can it be prevented?

It should be made clear that racist bullying, like all forms of bullying, will not be tolerated.

EBCSA and visiting Clubs should make it clear that racist language will not be tolerated at any time in order to create an atmosphere where all players, parents/guardians, volunteers and coaches know that it is inappropriate and feel comfortable to report incidents.

All players should be educated regarding different nationalities, races, cultures and religions. Most prejudices are the result of ignorance.

11. Homophobic Bullying

11.1. What is homophobic bullying?

Homophobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people, or where the individual being bullied has LGB parents/guardians or is referred to as LGB, even if he/she is not. Homophobic cullying can be bullying can be physical, emotional, verbal, physical or sexual.

11.2. How can it be prevented?

It should be made clear that homophobic bullying, like all forms of bullying, will not be tolerated.

EBCSA and visiting Clubs should make it clear that homophobic language will not be tolerated at any time in order to create an atmosphere where all players, parents/guardians, volunteers and coaches know that it is inappropriate and feel comfortable to report incidents.

12. Support and Contacts

- RFL Safeguarding Team (Rugby League): rugby-league.com/governance/safeguarding
- The FA Safeguarding Team (Football): thefa.com/safeguarding
- RFU Safeguarding (Rugby Union): englandrugby.com/governance/safeguarding

- KIDSCAPE: 020 7730 6300 | www.kidscape.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk | 0808 800 5000