



Anti-Bullying Policy



Bullying has no place in Athletics and should not be tolerated. The Forest of Dean Athletics Club promotes a positive anti-bullying ethos, implements best practice together with raising awareness amongst coaches and volunteers.

All Members must be aware and comply with the Clubs and the UKA's Code of Conduct and Behaviour, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member.

What is Bullying?

Bullying can be defined as follows: repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological, or physical conducted by an individual or group against others.

Bullying is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and it includes behaviour such as teasing, taunting, exclusion, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures), threatening, spreading rumours, hitting and extortion, by one or more persons against a victim.

Bullying has 7 key features:

1. An intention to be hurtful
2. The intention is carried out
3. The behaviour harms the target
4. The bully overwhelms the target with his or her power
5. There is often no justification for the action
6. The behaviour repeats itself again and again
7. The bully derives a sense of satisfaction from hurting the target

All bullies operate using furtiveness, threats and fear. Bullying can therefore only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in which it is not safe to do so.

The Effects of Bullying

The effects of bullying can last for some time and can significantly affect an individual's well-being, causing poor social development and depression. The outcomes of bullying can include:

- Physical injury, headaches, stomach aches.
- Stress symptoms such as sleeping and/or eating disorders and/or panic attacks
- Loss of confidence and self- esteem.
- Lowered academic achievement.
- Exclusion and isolation
- Consideration of suicide.
- Club members will take a pro-active role in investigating whether bullying is occurring.

Warning Signs that a Young Person Might be Getting Bullied

The following indicators are warning signs that a young person might be getting bullied and they are:

- Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in activities.
- Physical signs (unexplained bruises, scratches, or damage to belongings).
- Stress-caused illness - headaches, and stomach aches which seem unexplained.
- Fearful behaviour (fear of walking to a meeting, going different routes, asking to be driven).
- Frequent loss of, or shortage of, money with vague explanations.
- Having few friends.
- Changes in behaviour (withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, upset, distressed).
- Not eating.
- Attempting suicide or hinting at suicide.
- Anxiety (shown by nail-biting, fearfulness, tics).

There are other possible reasons for many of the above and may not have any relevance to the Forest of Dean Athletic Club, however we would ask that Guardians/parents be vigilant of these behaviours and that all members children and adults be aware that all bullies operate using furtiveness, threats and fear.

Bullying can therefore only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in which it is not safe to do so.

What Will the Forest of Dean Athletic Club Do if a Child Tells Us He/She is Being Bullied?

Report an Incident

to report an incident , please contact our Club Welfare Officer (Kate Dennant):-

M: 07957 249047

E: welfare@fodac.org.uk

Then:

- Listen to the victim – when an incident is reported, the CWO and another committee member will listen calmly and accept what is said.
- Take notes following the conversation and kept on file as the basis for the bullying report

- The notes will detail when, where, who, bystanders / witnesses, relevant history and club members response.
- Reassure the victim that help is available, action will be taken and that they were right to tell. Also that it was not their fault.
- Only those persons who need to know will be told of the incident.
- Club members should be aware that the safety of the junior athlete is paramount and that this must be maintained through appropriate supervision. Liaise with parents in relation to a solution and possible actions.

Procedures:

- 1 report bullying incidents to the club welfare officer or a member of the committee
- 2 In cases of serious bullying, **the incident will be referred to the UKA for advice**
- 3 Parents should be informed and will be asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- 4 If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
- 5 The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly,
- 6 An attempt will be made to help the bully or bullies change their behaviour
- 7 If mediation fails, and the bullying is seen to continue, the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution

Recommended club action:

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation they should follow the procedure outlined below.

- 1) Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be a genuine apology solves the problem.
- 2) If this fails/not appropriate a small panel (Made up from chairman, Welfare Officer, Secretary, committee members) should meet with the parent and child alleging bullying to get details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.
- 3) The same 3 persons should meet with the alleged bully and parent/s and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed
- 4) If bullying has in their view taken place the athletes should be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the bullying continues. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
- 5) In some cases the parent of the bully or bullied athletes can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
- 6) All coaches involved with both athletes should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

In the case of adults reported to be bullying athletes under 18

1. UKA should always be informed and will advice on action to be taken
2. It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a coach, child protection awareness training may be recommended.
3. More serious cases may be referred to the police, social services or judicial complaints procedure.

Prevention:

- The club will have a written constitution, which includes what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members of which the anti- bullying policy is one part.
- All athletes and parents will sign to accept the constitution upon joining the club.
- The club welfare officer will raise awareness about bullying and why it matters, and if issues of bullying arise in the club, will consider meeting with swimmers to discuss the issue openly and constructively

This policy is based on that provided to schools by KIDSCAPE. KIDSCAPE is a voluntary organisation committed to help prevent child bullying

I hereby confirm that the Anti-Bullying policy will be upheld and adhered to by all committee members, trustees and members.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees of the Forest of Dean Athletic Club:

Name:(capitals):_____

Role within Trustees:_____

Signed:_____ Date:_____

Club Welfare Officer:_____ (Name in Capitals)

Signed:_____

Date:_____