



Anti Bullying Policy

The purpose and scope of this policy statement:

Bristol & West AC works with adults, children, families and vulnerable adults as part of its activities. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can participate in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to prevent bullying from happening in our organisation
- to make sure bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need
- to provide information to all members, staff, volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all athletes or parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

We are a TELLING club. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the club safeguarding & welfare officer, any coach or any committee member.

This policy statement applies to anyone acting on behalf of Bristol & West AC, including committee members, coaches, volunteers and athletes.

What is bullying?

Bullying includes a range of abusive behaviour with the intention of hurting another person either physically or emotionally. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly; excluding someone (emotionally and physically); sending hurtful messages; tormenting, (e.g. hiding spikes/clothing, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing; kicking; hitting; punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts; graffiti; gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling; sarcasm; spreading rumours; teasing

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Athletes who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

This club has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All committee members, coaches, athletes, parents and club members should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All committee members, and coaching staff should know what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All athletes and parents should know what the club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a club we take bullying seriously. Athletes and parents should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms

A person may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if someone:

- says they are being bullied
- is unwilling to go to club sessions
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- feels ill before training sessions
- comes home with clothes torn or athletics equipment damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

In more extreme cases

- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying others
- stops eating
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

These signs and behaviours may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

Procedures

- Report bullying incidents to the club welfare officer or a member of the committee and an Incident Reporting Form should be completed.
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to UKA for advice.
- If the incident involves a child, the parents should be informed and will be asked to meet to discuss the problem.
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
- If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution.

Club action

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation they will 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/ is not appropriate a small panel (3 people made up from chairman, Welfare Officer, Secretary, committee members) should meet with the person (and if a child their parent/s) 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 person who has instigated bullying (and if a child their 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 the panels view, taken place the athlete/s 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 a parent of a child who has instigated bullying or a bullied athlete 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 advise 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 or the local authority's children's services

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
- 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 athletes to discuss the issue openly and constructively

Related policies and procedures

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures, including:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Procedures for responding to concerns about a child or young person's wellbeing
- Code of conduct for athletes, parents and coaches

These policies can be found in the **Club Documents** section of the website under **About Us**.

Safeguarding & Welfare Officers

Name: Emma Withers & Paul Jefferson

Email: safeguarding@bristolandwestac.org

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. This policy was last reviewed on 15th June 2021.

Signed: *Emma Withers* *Paul Jefferson*