



CLUB BULLYING POLICY



INTRODUCTION / REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION: Highfield Grange Football Club has adopted the FA and KIDSCAPE (schools education group) model for dealing with bullying within the organisation.

KIDSCAPE is a voluntary organisation committed to help prevent child bullying. They can be contacted on 0207 730 3300 or web site www.kidscape.org.uk

Another useful site is www.bullying.co.uk designed to give advice and guidance to parents and children who are faced with dealing with bullying.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Highfield Grange Football Club are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our members so that they can participate in football in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Highfield Grange and the club will have a ZERO TOLERANCE of any such incidents and individuals will be dealt with in accordance with the club disciplinary procedure.

If bullying does occur, all club members or parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Highfield Grange FC is a TELLING club. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the club welfare officer or any committee member.

What is bullying? Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person by the following ways:-

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages, tormenting(e.g. hiding football boots/shin guards, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any other 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

BULLYING OF ANY KIND RESULTS IN PAIN AND DISTRESS TO THE VICTIM

THE IMPORTANCE OF RESPONDING TO BULLYING

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

The club have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to the issues of bullying.

CLUB POLICY OBJECTIVES

- All Highfield club members, coaches, officials and parents/carers to have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All Highfield members, officials and coaching staff should know what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All players and parents/carers should know what the club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- Highfield as a club take bullying seriously. Players and parents/ carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will NOT BE TOLERATED
- All Highfield Grange FC members, coaches, officials and parents/carers will have an appreciation of the signs and indicators (see below) of bullying.

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

- Says he/she is 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 training equipment damaged;
- Has possessions that “go missing”;
- Asks for money or starts stealing 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 as nightmares
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- 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.

CLUB PROCEDURES

- 1) Report bullying incidents to the club Welfare Officer or a member of the club’s committee or contact the Lancashire County Football Association Child Protection Officer (LCFA- CPO).
- 2) In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to the LCFA-CPO for advice and possibly to the FA Case Management System.
- 3) Parents/carers should be informed and will be asked to meet to discuss the problem.
- 4) If necessary and appropriate, the 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 by the bully (bullies) to change their behaviour.
- 7) If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution, SEE CLUB MANUAL APPENDIX A10 –CLUB COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

CLUB ACTION

If Highfield Grange FC deem it appropriate to deal with the situation then the following course of action will be considered :-

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. A genuine apology may be considered by the club to resolve the problem.
2. If the above action fails or is not appropriate a small panel (made up from the chairman, secretary, treasurer, president or other members of the committee) should meet with the parents / carers and alleged child bully to obtain details of the allegation. Minutes will be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true record.
3. The same above persons should meet with the alleged bully and parents/carers and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should be again taken and agreed. In some cases separate interviews may be deemed necessary to minimise the risk of intimidation.
4. If bullying in the view of the panel has taken place, the individual should be warned and put on permanent or temporary suspended notice (time to be decided according to case) of further action if the bullying continues. Consideration will be given to a reconciliation meeting (if appropriate) between the parties at this time
5. In some cases the parent/carers of the bully or bullied player could be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The club committee will monitor the situation for a given period to ensure that the bullying is not being repeated.
6. All coaches and officials involved with the individuals will be made aware of the concerns and outcomes (warning / suspensions) of the process

ADULTS BULLYING UNDER 18's WITHIN HIGHFIELD GRANGE FC

- I. The LCFA-CPO will be informed and a course of action to be taken will be agreed.
- II. The FA's Child protection and best practice training will be recommended were the allegation is made against a club official, team manager or coach.
- III. More serious cases will be referred to the Police or /and the local Authority Social Services.

HIGHFIELD GRANGE FOOTBALL CLUB PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- ❖ This document constitutes the acceptable and proper behaviour expected of all Highfield Grange members
- ❖ All club members will be informed during the club signing on process of this policy. This document will be added to the pack given out at the beginning of each season. The Highfield Grange document A4 (player /parent consent form) will be

REF: HG – A38

altered to reflect that the signatories have read this policy given back to the manager.

- ❖ The club's welfare officer will raise awareness about bullying and why it matters, and if issues of bullying arise within the club will consider meeting with members to discuss the issue openly and constructively

THIS DOCUMENT TO BE DISTRIBUTED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SEASON AND TO ANY NEW PLAYERS DURING THE SEASON