

Anti-bullying

Policy and Procedures



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Anti-bullying Policy

Date of Policy: August 2020 updated August 2021 updated August 2022 August 23 August 24

This policy super-cedes any other Anti-bullying policy.

Anti-bullying Policy Statement

Bristol City Football Club, Bristol City Academy, Bristol City Women's Football Club PGA- ETC, Bristol City Robins Foundation, Bristol Bears Rugby, Bristol Bears Women, Bristol Bears Academy, Bristol Bears Community Foundation, Bristol Flyers, Bristol Flyers Foundation, Bristol Sport Foundation, Ashton Gate and Bristol Sport are collectively referred to as "the Company".

The "Company" is committed to providing a caring, friendly, safe environment for all of its members so that they can participate in any sport in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Principles

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable within the "Company". If bullying does occur, all "Company" members, parents or visitors should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

We are a TELLING club. Bullying will NOT be tolerated.

This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Safeguarding team, Welfare Officer, or HR department.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Ways bullying may occur

- 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 use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

- On-line bullying (see appendix 1)

The importance of responding to bullying

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

Individuals who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. The impact upon a child, young person or vulnerable adult can be devastating, and in some cases, affect all aspects of their life. In extreme circumstances it can lead to suicide threats or even attempted suicide.

The “Company” has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Signs and indicators

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

In more extreme cases

- Starts stammering
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children, siblings, or adults
- 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. (Refer to the “Company” Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults policies for further information on reporting a concern)

Procedures

Report bullying incidents to the Safeguarding team safeguarding@bristol-sport.co.uk or [07880140411](tel:07880140411) . If a person's life may be in danger go directly to the police.

The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated, and the bullying stopped.

An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour. Should this be unsuccessful, and the bullying is seen to continue the “Company” will initiate disciplinary action.

Possible “Company” action

If the “Company” decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation, they will follow the procedure outlined below:

- Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
- If this fails/is not appropriate, a small panel (made up from the Academy Manager or Head of Department, DSO, HR, or Welfare team) should meet with the alleged victim to get details of the allegation. Where a child or vulnerable adult is concerned a parent/ carer or representative should also be present. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.
The same members should meet with the alleged bully and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed by all as a true account.
- If bullying has in the view of the “Company” panel taken place, the individual 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.

Possible outcomes

- Where a child is concerned it may be appropriate for the parent of the bully or bullied player to 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.
- All coaches involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e., the warning.
- It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a team manager, official or coach, The FA’s Child Protection and Best Practice awareness training maybe recommended.
- More serious cases may be referred directly to the FA or appropriate governing body, Police and/or Children’s Services.

Prevention

On behalf of the “Company” the Safeguarding, Welfare teams together with HR department will raise awareness about bullying and why it matters, and if issues of bullying arise in the club, will consider meeting with members to discuss the issue openly and constructively.

Appendix 1.

Cyberbullying

The anonymity that can come with using the internet can sometimes make people feel safe to say and do hurtful things that they otherwise would not do in person. It is made very clear to members of the “Company” community what is expected of them in terms of respecting their peers, members of the public and staff, and any intentional breach of this will result in disciplinary action.

If an allegation of bullying does come up, the “Company” will:

- Take it seriously
- Act as quickly as possible to establish the facts. It may be necessary to examine school systems and logs or contact the service provider in order to identify the bully
- Record and report the incident
- Provide support and reassurance to the victim
- Make it clear to the ‘bully’ that this behavior will not be tolerated. If there is a group of people involved, they will be spoken to individually and as a whole group. Where children are involved, It is important that where they have harmed another, either physically or emotionally, they redress their actions. Often the school will support in ensuring that that they understand what they have done and the impact of their actions.

If a sanction is used, it will correlate to the seriousness of the incident and the ‘bully’ will be told why it is being used. They will be asked to remove any harmful or inappropriate content that has been published, and the service provide may be contacted to do this if they refuse or are unable to remove it they may have their Internet access suspended.

“Company “procedures will be followed at all times.

Date reviewed	Position	Owner
August 2020	Executive Board	M.A. Martin
August 2021	Executive Board	
August 2022	Executive Board	
August 2023	Executive Board	
August 2024	Executive Board	

