



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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## Introduction

1. Glenearn Badminton Club (“the Club”) does not tolerate any form of bullying. This anti-bullying policy largely follows the April 2023 version of Badminton Scotland’s anti-bullying policy.
2. Bullying is a behaviour that can make a person feel frightened, threatened, left out and hurt. Something only has to happen once to make a person feel worried or scared to go to the badminton club, coached session or other activities they enjoy. For the purposes of this policy, a child is recognised as someone under the age of 18 years.
3. This policy applies to all children, young people, and adults regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion, socio-economic status or family circumstance.
4. Bullying is deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time but can also be a one-off occurrence, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.
5. In Scotland, bullying is defined by “respect me” as follows: *Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person’s capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of ‘agency’. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online. (respect me, 2015)*
6. Some examples of bullying could be:
  - a. Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting.
  - b. Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
  - c. Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
  - d. Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue, of sexuality.
  - e. Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
7. Bullying can be between peers but there are also times when adults’ behaviour towards children can be described as “bullying” such as a parent who pushes too hard, or a coach or manager with a ‘win at all costs’ mentality. Badminton Scotland and the Club believes that adults who behave in a manner that causes distress, hurt or upset to a child are behaving on a spectrum that runs from poor practice to abuse and that behaviour could be more appropriately dealt with via the Club’s policy for safeguarding, wellbeing and the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

8. It should be recognised that bullying can take place both in person and in the virtual world of social networking sites, emails or text messages.

### **Key principles**

9. Bullying of any kind is not acceptable within the Club or any events hosted by the Club.
10. The Club asks that anyone who knows that bullying is happening within the Club, tells the Club Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer, the Club Safeguarding Officer or other Club official.
11. Any incident of bullying which occurs will be taken seriously, responded to promptly, and procedures followed to resolve the situation.
12. All concerns will be managed accordingly with reference to the Club's policy for safeguarding, wellbeing and the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
13. The Club has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for children and young people, adults provide them with the highest possible standard of care.
14. It is the responsibility of every adult working within badminton, whether professional or volunteer, to ensure that all children and young people can enjoy the sport in a safe enjoyable environment.
15. The Club is committed to the effective recruitment, and appropriate training of all professional staff, coaches, and volunteers. This will enable us to work together with parents/carers and other organisations to ensure that the needs and the safeguarding of young people remain paramount.

### **Signs and symptoms**

16. A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he/she is being bullied. Children and young people have described bullying as:
  - a. Being called names or teased.
  - b. Being hit, pushed, pulled, pinched, or kicked.
  - c. Having their bag, mobile or other possessions taken.
  - d. Being forced to hand over money.
  - e. Being forced to do things they do not want to do.
  - f. Being ignored or left out.
  - g. Being attacked because of religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance or other perceived difference.
  - h. Receiving abusive text messages or inappropriate photographs.
  - i. Being under pressure owing to untruths, unkind comments or inappropriate photographs being shared electronically or online.

17. Other signs and symptoms of bullying may be that a child or young person:
- a. Doesn't want to attend training or Club activities.
  - b. Makes changes to their usual routine.
  - c. Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
  - d. Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
  - e. Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
  - f. Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
  - g. Is bullying other children or siblings.
  - h. Stops eating or rapidly loses weight.
18. Of course, these signs and behaviour may not constitute bullying and could instead be symptoms of other problems. Coaches and volunteers need to be aware of these possible signs and report any concerns to the Club Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer, the Club Safeguarding Officer or other Club official.

### **Cyber bullying**

19. Another common form of bullying that many children and young people experience is that which takes place electronically or online. This can be in the form of malicious text messages and/or inappropriate photos being sent to a young person. Cyber bullying is wilful harm inflicted through the medium of electronic devices and is meant to cause emotional distress.
20. Young people are more at risk owing to the increased use of mobile technology made easy via the advancement in smart phones, mobile devices and apps. Bullying in sport is gaining increasing awareness as an issue putting more young people off sport.
21. Bullying should not be ignored, and the person being bullied should be supported through what can be a traumatic experience. Bullying will not just go away. The person displaying bullying behaviour can be very cunning and develop strategies to avoid it being seen by anyone but the person being bullied.

### **Responding to bullying**

22. When talking about bullying, it's never helpful to label children or adults as "bullies" or "victims". Labels can stick and can isolate a person, and others involved such as friends, parents and carers whose support will be required to help address the situation. It is preferable to talk about someone displaying bullying behaviour rather than label them a bully. Behaviour can be changed with help and support.

### **Procedures and management of bullying allegations**

23. The Club encourages all children, young people and adults to report any suspected instances of bullying to one of the Club coaches/helpers, the Club Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer, the Club Safeguarding Officer or other Club official. Children need to be assured not to keep worries to themselves, but to tell their parent and/or coach. The Club should ensure that all instances of bullying are taken very seriously and will be investigated thoroughly.

24. Report bullying incidents to the Club's Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer, or the Club's Safeguarding Officer, who will action the following:
- a. Record the details of the allegation.
  - b. If the incident is an adult displaying bullying behaviour towards a child or young person, the Safeguarding Officer will report the incident to the Badminton Scotland Lead Safeguarding Officer and a decision will be made on the method and process for managing the incident.
  - c. If the incident is a child or young person displaying bullying behaviour towards another child or young person, the parents of the child or young person allegedly displaying bullying behaviour and of the person being bullied may be informed.
  - d. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated in a fair and transparent manner by talking and listening to those involved.
  - e. Parents of both parties may be asked to come into a meeting to discuss the problem.
  - f. An attempt will be made to help resolve the situation and change behaviours.
  - g. If the situation is not or cannot be resolved through mediation, training or mentoring, refer back to Badminton Scotland Lead Safeguarding Officer who will manage the incident in line with Badminton Scotland Policy for Safeguarding, Wellbeing and the Protection of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults disciplinary procedures.

### **Providing support**

25. The Club takes bullying seriously. Players, coaches, volunteers, parents and carers should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported.