



Aghaderg GAC & Ballyvarley HC



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT

Increased levels of Bullying amongst all age groups and in particular amongst young people is a concern for many sports organisations. Aghaderg GAC & Ballyvarley HC has become increasingly aware of the issue of bullying and the detrimental impact it may have on those involved, i.e. victims, perpetrators, families, bystanders and the Association in general.

Coaches should challenge bullying in any form i.e. physical or emotional. Physical bullying can take the form of attacks, such as hitting, kicking, taking or damaging belongings. Emotional bullying may be a verbal assault, including name-calling, insults, repeat teasing, sectarian/racist assaults, or it may take more indirect forms, such as spreading malicious gossip, rumours or excluding someone from a social group. Bullying is not an accepted behaviour towards anyone at Aghaderg GAC & Ballyvarley HC be they child, coach, volunteer or parent. Anyone found to be bullying others will be dealt with seriously both in regards to the behaviour exhibited and the reasons for the behaviour.

What is Bullying?

Bullying behaviour can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. The term 'target' is used to describe the person or persons that are bullied.

Bullying contains seven key features:

- An intention to be hurtful
- The intention is carried out
- The behaviour harms the target (the person or persons being bullied)
- The bully overwhelms the target with his or her power
- There is often no justification for the action
- The behaviour repeats itself again and again
- The bully derives a sense of satisfaction from hurting the target



Aghaderg GAC & Ballyvarley HC



Guidance Notes for Dealing with Allegations of bullying

There are a number of forms or types of bullying which may take place in a sports context including:

- **Direct bullying** – where the behaviour is obvious and bystanders are aware of it, e.g. physical or verbal bullying
- **Indirect bullying** – where the behaviour is more difficult to recognise, e.g. intimidation or isolation
- **Verbal bullying** – including slandering, ridiculing, slagging, sarcasm, abusive telephone calls, name calling etc.
- **Physical bullying**- including pushing, striking, shoving, assaults, damage to person's property and theft.
- **Gesture bullying** – including non-verbal gestures/glances which can convey threatening or frightening messages/intent.
- **E-bullying/Cyber-bullying** – using web pages, emails, text etc. to abuse, intimidate and attack others, either directly or indirectly.
- **Relational bullying** – behaviour which sets out to deliberately damage another person's friendship or feelings of inclusion in a friendship group, e.g. exclusion, isolation etc.
- **Extortion** – the deliberate extortion of money or other items of property accompanied by threats.
- **Homophobic bullying** – bullying that is typically aimed at young people who are or who are perceived to be gay, lesbian or bisexual. It can include name calling, isolation and violence.
- **Racial bullying** – can be expressed physically, socially or psychologically when one is labelled negatively as being different from others according to one's race and could also include taunting, gesturing or graffiti.
- **Mobbing** – This means that the target is being bullied by a group of perpetrators and not just one perpetrator.
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments.



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All types and forms of Bullying are unacceptable. Bullying behaviour may take place in any setting whether it is in schools, the home or in a sporting environment.

Instances of Bullying in a sporting environment, as with many other forms of social interaction by young people, may be carried out by other children, younger or older, by children individually or as part of a group or by an adult or adults involved in the club. Indeed a child may be suffering from Bullying outside of their participation in the GAA but the actions suffered may still impinge upon the child's participation in GAA club activities and games.

Bullying is a 'whole organisation matter' and as such requires a 'whole organisation' approach. This means that any anti-bullying approach should step beyond those children and young people and sports leaders who are directly involved and take account of everyone in the organisation or club, as they all have a part to play in countering bullying.

The Individual

- Respect every child's need for, and rights to, a play environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect for every individual's feelings and views.
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special.
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.
- Ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained and displayed for all to see.



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Bullying

Bullying will not be accepted or condoned. All forms of bullying will be addressed.

Bullying can include:

- physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc
- name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation and the continual ignoring of individuals
- sectarian/racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- sexual comments and /or suggestions
- unwanted physical contact.

Children from ethnic minorities, disabled children, young people who are gay or lesbian, or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and may well be targeted.

Everybody has the responsibility to work together to stop bullying – the child, the parent, the coach, the sport's official.

Appropriate forums will be established within the club, including children, parents & coaches, to address, monitor and stop bullying.

Commitment to the early identification of bullying and prompt, collective action to deal with it.

Policy and practice should be agreed through consultation with the club, parents and children.

Children should be encouraged to take a role in stopping bullying in the club.

Policy and practice should be reviewed regularly in the light of changing needs and changes adopted by other agencies (e.g. schools).

Coaches will have access to appropriately trained staff for support when dealing with bullying.

Support to the Child

- Children should know who will listen to and support them.
- Any advice and assistance should be given by an experienced coach.
- Children should have access to Helpline numbers.
- Children should be told what is being recorded, in what context and why



Aghaderg GAC & Ballyvarley HC



- Systems should be established to open the door to children wishing to talk about bullying or any other issue that affects them. Barriers to talking need to be broken down to enable children to approach adults.
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported, whether the child being bullied or the child who is bullying.
- Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.
- Children being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development.
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying.
- Sanctions involving long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, should be avoided.

Support to the Parents

- Parents should be advised on club policy and practice about bullying.
- Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the child's parent(s).
- Parental advice on action will be sought and agreements made as to what action should be taken.
- Information and advice on coping with bullying will be given.
- Support should be offered to the parent(s) including information on other agencies or support lines.

Signed: _____ Date: _____ Secretary

Signed: _____ Date: _____ Chairman

Signed: Róisín Veenan Date: 4/7/23 Children's Officer

