

Lowick YFC

Anti-Bullying Policy



Lowick Youth Football Club will strive to create a safe and friendly environment for young people to learn and enjoy football. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our club. If bullying does occur, all club members and parents should be able to report it, and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Nobody should suffer in silence as a result of bullying. We are a TELLING club: anyone who knows or suspects that bullying is happening is expected speak up by telling the club welfare officer or any committee member.

What is bullying?

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

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly
- Excluding - emotionally and physically
- Sending hurtful text messages
- Tormenting - hiding football boots etc, threatening gestures
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting 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.

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. Individuals who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

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

Be Alert to Signs 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 or she is being bullied
- is unwilling to go to club sessions
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- regularly feels ill before training sessions
- comes home with clothes torn or training equipment damaged
- has possessions 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 has 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.

When Bullying Occurs in Our Club

- 1 Incidents should be reported to the club welfare officer or to any member of the committee without delay
- 2 The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- 3 If appropriate the matter will be dealt with by the club committee following the procedure below
- 4 In serious cases, the incident will be referred to Northumberland FA Child Protection Officer for advice and possibly to the FA Case Management System. If necessary and appropriate, Police will be consulted
- 5 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, which may result in temporary or permanent exclusion from the club.

How The Club Will Deal with an Incident

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation in-house, they will follow the procedure outlined below.

- 1 If appropriate an attempt will be made at reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem
- 2 If this fails or is not appropriate a small panel (made up from chairman, club welfare officer, secretary, committee members) will offer to meet with the parents/carers and child alleging bullying to get details of the allegation. Minutes will be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account
- 3 The same three persons will ask to 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 will again be taken and agreed
- 4 If bullying has in their view taken place, the individual will be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the bullying continues. A reconciliation meeting between parties may or may not be appropriate at this time
- 5 In some cases the parent/carers of the bully or bullied player can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate
- 6 The club committee will monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated
- 7 All coaches involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome

In the Case of an Adult Reported to be Bullying Anyone Within the Club

- ❖ Northumberland FA CPO will be informed and will advise on action to be taken
- ❖ 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 may be recommended
- ❖ More serious cases may be referred to the Police and/or Social Services.

Preventing Bullying

Staff and junior members are made aware of acceptable standards of conduct through the club recruitment process and signing-on procedures. Under the specific leadership of the Club Welfare Officer it is the responsibility of all club members, staff, parents and junior members, to uphold those standards and to be quick to take appropriate action to deal with problems when they occur.