



ANTI-BULLING POLICY

Statement: May 2008

The Individual

- Respect every child's need for the right to a gymnastics environment, where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect every individual's feelings and views.
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make us special.
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.
- Ensure safety by putting the anti-bulling rules and practice into operation, explaining them carefully and displaying them for all to see.

Children from ethnic minorities, disabled children or particular sensitivity are more vulnerable to abuse and may be targeted.

Appropriate staffing and volunteers should have access to training on anti-bullying.

Where a child exhibits sexually harmful behaviour to another child, it is important to involve the Welfare Officer responsible for child protection as soon as possible. He/She may involve the Social Services Team responsible for Child Protection.

Staff and volunteers should be made aware of the differences between sexually harmful behaviour and bullying using clear policies and procedures.

Where a child's bullying behaviour is of violent or aggressive nature and the Club Leader is unable to address the behaviour through behaviour strategies or disciplinary measures within a reasonable time, the child protection procedures should be exercised.

Bullying rules and practices

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 of rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation and the continual ignoring of an individual.
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures etc.
- Sexual comments and/or suggestions.
- Unwanted physical contact

Anti-bullying policy

- Everybody has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying – the child, the parent/ carer, coach, welfare officer and committee.
- Forums to develop policies and strategies within the Club should be operational. These should be reviewed regularly in light of changing needs and changes adopted by outside agencies.

Support to the child

- Children need to know who will listen to and support them.
- Any advice or assistance should be given by an appropriately trained and experienced welfare officer.
- Children should have access to Child Helpline numbers.
- Children should be told what is being recorded, in what context and why.
- Children should be enabled to have access to a safe adult to talk to about bullying or any other issue that affects them. These adults are trained in listening skills and they must know the limit of their confidentiality and understand the nature of consent.
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and will be supported, whether it is the child being bullied or the child who is bullying.
- Any reported incidents of bullying will be investigated objectively and will require listening carefully to all those involved.
- Children being bullied will be supported and assistance given, to uphold their right to learn and develop in a safe environment which allows them to reach their potential.
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying. It should be recognised that the bully may well have been a victim of bullying themselves.
- Sanctions should be sensitive and positively proactive to help rather than subject the child to negative isolation or being made a public example of.