

Gloucester PSFA - Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of Intent

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable within GPSFA. If bullying does occur, all squad members or parents can voice their concerns and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to inform the Association's Welfare Officer (AWO), other committee members or team managers / coaches.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression – either physical or emotional - with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim(s).

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.

Bullying will not be tolerated within GPSFA and the Association recognises its responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to any 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 attend training sessions, matches or other activities**
- **becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence**
- **feels ill before team activities**
- **comes home with clothes torn or training equipment damaged**
- **has possessions go "missing"**
- **asks for money or starts stealing money**
- **has unexplained cuts or bruises**
- **is frightened to say what's wrong**
- **gives improbable excuses for any of the above**

These signs and behaviours may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

In the event of bullying taking place:

1. Any incidents of bullying should be reported to the team managers and / or AWO
2. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
3. An attempt will be made to help the bully / bullies) change their behaviour

GPSFA Bullying Procedure

- 1) Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
- 2) Members of the Association's Disciplinary Committee will meet with the parent and child alleging bullying to ascertain details of the allegation. Minutes will be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.
- 3) The same Disciplinary Committee members will meet with the alleged bully and parent(s) and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes shall again be taken and agreed.
- 4) If bullying has in the view of the Disciplinary Committee taken place, the following procedures may be implemented:
 - a) Consideration will be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
 - b) The individual shall be warned and put on notice that if a further incident(s) occurs, a temporary or permanent suspension will be implemented.
 - c) If the initial incident is considered serious enough, the player will be asked to leave the squad with immediate effect. The Head Teacher of the player's school will be informed.
 - d) If necessary, the police will be informed.
- 5) All coaches involved with the individual(s) concerned shall be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the disciplinary process ie. the procedures put in place.

In the case of adults reported to be bullying anyone within the association:

1. The AWO shall be informed.
2. A meeting involving the AWO and 2 other Disciplinary Committee members, together with those alleging the bullying incident(s) will be held – minutes will be taken.
3. The GFA CPO shall be informed if necessary and will advise on further action to be taken.
4. In most cases where the allegation is made regarding an official or coach, The FA's child protection and best practice awareness training may be recommended.
5. More serious cases may be referred to the police, social services or judicial complaints procedure.

Other Sources of Information

KIDSCAPE (a voluntary organisation committed to help prevent child bullying) can be contacted on 0207 730 3300 or their web site can be accessed at www.kidscape.org.uk.

You may also wish to access www.bullying.co.uk, another website designed to give advice and guidance to parents and children who are faced with dealing with bullying.

The FA web site's (www.theFA.com) Child Protection section provides further information and documentation on a variety of Child Protection issues.