

# Anti Bullying Policy



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## **1. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY**

Everyone involved in angling should be aware of what bullying is. It is the view of Bedford Angling Club (BAC) that all clubs/fisheries/organisations should have an up to date policy identifying how to deal with bullying if it occurs and that we will take bullying seriously.

We aim to help prevent bullying from happening within our organisation as much as possible and to highlight that when bullying does happen it is responded to quickly and support is signposted where necessary.

Bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated in the BAC.

## **2. WHAT IS BULLYING?**

Bullying is the most frequently reported causes of abuse or harm for children and young people and you may find that you observe situations where a young person appears to be being bullied.

Everyone has the right to participate in angling free from the fear of bullying. Bullying can be described as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over time where those being bullied find it difficult to defend themselves.

Bullying has the potential to cause permanent harm (physical, emotional or psychological). Fisheries and clubs should take steps to prevent bullying behaviour wherever possible and respond to incidents when they occur. A preventative approach means that sport is playing its part to create an environment and society in which people treat each other with respect.

## **3. TYPES OF BULLYING**

Bullying can be seen to include:

Verbal: including name calling, teasing, threatening, rumours, sarcasm, graffiti and gestures.

Physical: hitting, kicking, punching, spitting, stealing/breaking belongings.

Emotional: ignoring, hurtful emails/texts, exclusion from activity, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating.

Anyone can be the target of bullying, however in general victims are typically shy, sensitive and perhaps anxious or insecure. Sometimes they are singled out for physical reasons for example being overweight or physically small.

Bullies come from all walks of life; they bully for a variety of different reasons and may even have been bullied or abused themselves. Typically, bullies can have low self-esteem, be excitable, aggressive or jealous. Crucially, they have learned how to gain power over others.

## **4. PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS.**

Any bullying behaviour that is focused on one of the nine protected characteristics: Gender Orientation, Race, Religion, Disability, Pregnancy, Age, Sexual Orientation, Marriage and Sex are now classed as harassment and have a legal process that may lead to prosecution.

## **5. IDENTIFYING BULLYING.**

The competitive nature of sport can make it an ideal environment for the bully. The bully in angling can be:

- a parent who pushes too hard;
- a coach who adopts a 'win-at-all costs' philosophy;
- an angler who intimidates others;
- an official who places unfair pressure on a person;
- a spectator who shouts abuse.
- other children isolating or harming another child physically or emotionally.

Bullying can carry over from the club setting into a person's online environment.

## **6. IMPACT OF BULLYING.**

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children, young people and adults at risk, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm including self-harm or in extreme cases, suicide.

## **7. SIGNS OF BULLYING**

There are a number of signs that may indicate a person is being bullied and these include:

- sudden reluctance to go to activities such as club events or matches that they used to enjoy or a drop off in performance/attendance;
- regularly feeling ill before matches
- physical signs such as stomach-aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bedwetting, scratching and bruising, coming home with damaged equipment or clothes
- behavioural changes such as becoming withdrawn, anxious, clingy, depressed, tearful, aggressive, unreasonable;
- starting bullying others; a shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.
- in more extreme cases, they might stop eating, start stammering, cry themselves to sleep, have nightmares, run away or threaten/attempt suicide.

These signs may indicate other problems or be a reaction to other events in a child, young person, or adult at risks life but the possibility of bullying should be considered.

## **8. PROCEDURES**

1. Report bullying incidents to your Club Welfare Officer or a member of the BAC committee.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to Angling Trust for advice or contact one of the organisations listed at the bottom of this document.
3. Parents will, where applicable, be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem with the BAC.
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying, will be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour where possible and appropriate.

## **9. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

If BAC decides it is appropriate for us to deal with the situation they will follow the procedure outlined below:

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology and understanding how the actions of the bully have affected the bullied, solves the problem (should only be done when it is felt appropriate).
2. If this fails or is not appropriate, a representative from the BAC committee will meet with the parents/carers and child/member alleging bullying to obtain exact details of the allegation. Notes will be taken for clarity.
3. The same representative will meet with the alleged bully and, where appropriate, their parents/carers to understand the allegation from their point of view. They will be asked to answer and give their account of the allegation. Notes will be taken for clarity.
4. If bullying has, in the representative's view, taken place the matter will be referred to the BAC committee and addressed using the BAC Disciplinary & Appeals Policy.
5. In some cases, the parent/carer of the bully or victim of bullying can be asked to be present at BAC waters with the young person each time they attend, if appropriate.
6. The BAC committee will monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not continuing.
7. All coaches/instructors and volunteers involved with both parties will be made aware of the concerns and sanctions.

8. If deemed as harassment the incident will be reported to the Police.

## **10. PREVENTION**

BAC will adopt the Angling Trust Safeguarding Children Policy and procedures or have established their own. This includes codes of conduct for all members and an anti-bullying policy.

The Club Welfare Officer will raise awareness of bullying within the club. If issues of bullying arise then they will consider meeting with the members to discuss the issue openly and constructively.

## **11. HELP**

KIDSCAPE Anti-Bullying Advice for Parents 0300 102 4481

Family Lives 0808 800 2222

NSPCC 24 hour help line 0808 800 5000