

SOUTHWOLD RUGBY

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

RATIONALE

At Southwold RFC we aim to create a safe and secure learning environment where individuals treat each other with respect and understanding. Bullying will not be tolerated at all in our club.

Bullying will be taken seriously, responded to promptly, and procedures followed to deal with the situation. It is the responsibility of every adult working in rugby union whether professional or volunteer, to ensure that all young people can enjoy the sport in a safe and enjoyable manner.

AIMS

- To create a positive ethos within the club based on mutual respect and trust
- To recognise what bullying is, and to provide effective measures to address bullying issues.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Children and young people have described it as:

- Being called names
- Being teased
- Being hit, pushed, pulled, pinched, or kicked
- Having their bag, mobile or possessions taken
- Receiving abusive text messages
- Being forced to hand over money
- Being forced to do things that they don't want to do
- Being ignored or left out
- Being victimized or attacked because of their religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance or ethnic or racial origin.

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour which results in the victim feeling distressed. Bullying occurs when this behaviour is exercised by power rather than an exchange between equals. This power may be due to greater physical or psychological strength or greater numbers.

INDICATORS OF BULLYING

A child may indicate by their behaviour that s/he is being bullied; parents, coaches and volunteers should be vigilant for the below signs:

- Does not want to attend training or other club activities
- Changes their usual routine
- Begins to be disruptive during sessions
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or appears to lack confidence
- Becomes aggressive towards others, disruptive or unreasonable
- Starts to stammer
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Start to bully other children
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong.

ESTABLISHING A POSITIVE CLUB ETHOS

The most important aspect of our strategy to combat bullying is the creation of a positive and inclusive Club ethos. This begins with how adults in the Club treat each other, parents, and youngsters: with respect and understanding, even in difficult situations. Concerns expressed by youngsters and parents are always listened to carefully and taken seriously.

We promote and follow the RFU Code of Conduct:

Everyone involved in rugby in England, whether as a player, coach, referee, administrator, parent, or spectator is expected to uphold the Core Values of our sport:

Teamwork - Respect - Enjoyment - Discipline - Sportsmanship

- Play to win - but not at all cost
- Win with dignity, lose with grace
- Observe the Laws and regulations of the game
- Respect opponents, referees, and all participants
- Reject cheating, racism, violence, and drugs
- Value volunteers and paid officials alike
- Enjoy the game.

We aim to be constantly promoting and reinforcing positive behaviour and developing all children's self-esteem through celebration of achievement. In this way, by aiming to 'include' everyone in the Club community, it is much less likely either those children will become a focus for bullying, or that others may resort to bullying.

We encourage children, parents and staff to report any suspected instances of bullying to one of the coaching staff or to the Club Safeguarding Officer. Children, need to be assured not to keep worries to themselves, but to tell their parent and/or a Coach. The whole Club community needs to be assured that all instances are taken very seriously and investigated thoroughly.

PROCEDURES AND MANAGEMENT OF BULLYING

It is essential that the first adult involved in the situation reassures the victim and informs the Club Safeguarding Officer. Details of the report are to be recorded on the RFU Incident Report Form.

If the incident is an adult bullying a young person the Club Safeguarding Officer is to immediately report the incident to the CB Safeguarding Manager and request that the incident is reported to the RFU Safeguarding Team.

If the incident involves a young person bullying another young person then the Club are permitted by the RFU to investigate the incident themselves. Assistance and guidance are available from the CB Safeguarding Manager and the RFU Safeguarding Team at any stage of the investigation. Parents/Guardians should be informed and invited to attend a meeting to discuss this problem. If necessary and appropriate the police and Social Services will also be consulted.

PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

- Listen carefully to their child, and reassure them that action will be taken
- Stay calm whatever the concerns
- Discuss issues with the Club at the earliest opportunity, and review actions regularly
- Give the Club time to address the issues.

If attempts at mediation fail to resolve the situation, and the bullying is seen to continue the Club will initiate disciplinary action under the guidance of the CB Safeguarding Manager and/or RFU Safeguarding Team.

It is essential that ALL Committee Members, Coaches, Volunteers, Parents, and Children are aware of this policy.

Jonathan Mayall

Southwold Rugby Schools Liaison Officer