

Anti-Bullying Policy

Effective Date: 15/01/2026

Reviewed Date: 15/01/2026

Next Review Date: 15/01/2027

Version: 1.0

Principles of the Anti-Bullying Policy

Please note: wording in this colour are suggestions and ideas around antibullying added in by our young members of Basingstoke Gymnastics Club.

To be committed to the gymnastics club mission statement by:

- Consistent approach to Bullying.
- Demonstrate that as a gymnastics club we will not tolerate Bullying.
- Providing a safe, secure, and positive environment for members to be able to grow and develop as individuals.
- Striving to ensure that everyone is treated with respect, *using kind words*.
- Enabling all to feel protected.
- Proactive approach.
- Supporting victims in a positive way.
- Making all members of the gymnastics club community aware that they have a responsibility to ensure the safety of others.
- Involving parents and guardians in this anti-bullying policy.

Basingstoke Gymnastics Club also adopted British Gymnastics guidance around the topic of anti-bullying which can be found on their website at www.british-gymnastics.org.

When Bullying is Reported

- 1) Investigate and support members at an appropriate level. This could involve the immediate contact of external agencies depending on the severity or form of bullying.
- 2) Collect information about the incident from relevant parties and witnesses if necessary.
- 3) Respond to the incident using appropriate sanctions and follow-up procedures.

Bullying at Basingstoke will be taken very seriously, and a range of appropriate strategies will be applied to ensure a successful outcome.

What is Bullying?

“Bullying is defined as behaviour by an individual or group that hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally. Bullying is generally taken to mean any sort of physical or psychological intimidation. It could hurt, threaten, or frighten someone and cause distress. There are several kinds of bullying. These may be exhibited by an individual member towards another individual, by a group towards an individual or by one group to another. It can include personal, sexual, or racial harassment and bullies can frighten so that a person does not want to go to the club”.

Types of Bullying

Physical – *hurting*, hitting, *kicking*, *pushing*, *shoving*, spitting, pinching, *punching*, sexual assault, throwing things, extortion, stealing, hiding or damaging belongings.

Verbal – *name-calling including about appearance*, mockery, insulting, making offensive remarks, sexual innuendo, threatening;

Cyberbullying – *online bullying*, the use of ICT, e.g. Mobile phones chat-room/blogs/messages board, email, gaming console, instant messaging (MSN, Yahoo, AOL, BBM, Snapchat), mobile phones including photos, social network sites e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, video, hosting sites (YouTube), webcams, sending viruses or hacking programmes, stealing someone’s identity to deliberately upset someone else. Can include harassment, threats, and insults.

Indirect – *silencing and leaving out*, spreading unpleasant stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, intimidation, graffiti, defacing of personal property, inciting others to bullying behaviour, distribution of literature, display of pornographic, classist, disablist, homophobic, racist, or sexual material.

Psychological - E.g., damage to reputation (sexual, denial of identity, gender/ethnicity), extortion of belongings, identity theft/impersonation, isolation/refusal to work/play with other members, revealing personal information. Victimisation after previous complaint e.g., bullying due to either victims or bystanders speaking out as a result of a past bullying incident, *teasing because can’t do skills, being mean because someone didn’t do well.*

Who bullies?

Anyone has the capacity to bully. Those who perceive themselves as low status within a community, institution or group may use bullying to artificially boost their status. Self-esteem is therefore a key factor in whether someone bullies or not. This puts equal opportunities and inclusion at the centre of all anti-bullying work in gymnastics clubs.

Who is bullied?

Anyone can be bullied – member, parent/guardian, or staff member. People who suffer bullying are often perceived by others to be different. Sometimes the perceived difference is individual to that person – shyness, academic ability, physical appearance, clothing and possessions, accent, perceived inappropriate behaviour.

Frequently the perceived difference comes from labelling an individual as part of a group. Such bullying would then be designated as, homophobic, racist, religious, or sexist. People can be a member of more than one group.

Examples of Bullying

Homophobic: any incident perceived by the alleged victim or any other person to be targeted around being lesbian, gay, or bisexual. People do not have to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual to suffer homophobic bullying.

Transphobic: incidents are those perceived to be insulting to someone's gender identity or to transgender people.

Racist: any incident perceived to be racist by the alleged victim or any other person. Incidents related to religion, culture or those involving members who identify as gypsy/Roma travellers come under this heading too.

Related to disability, SEN, or health: behaviour perceived to be insulting to people with a range of medical, mobility, sensory, mental health or learning impairments. Incidents related to other health or Special Educational Needs come under this heading too.

Related to home circumstances: e.g. young carers or children in care, social class.

Sexist: incidents perceived to be demeaning to a gender in general. If unchallenged this can eventually lead to domestic violence.

Sexual: incidents include intrusive language, distribution of inappropriate pictures, damage to sexual reputation, inappropriate touching, and other behaviour to involve unwanted sexual attention.

Faith-based bullying: negative stereotyping, name calling or ridiculing based on religion.

Gifted/talented bullying: name-calling, innuendo, ostracism, or negative peer pressure based on high levels of ability or effort.

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

Physical signs - E.g., Physical injuries, damaged clothing with no convincing explanation and general ill-health due to stress.

Emotional signs - E.g., *if someone is sad go to them and ask if they are ok*, mood swings, apparent changes in personality, constant anxiety/nervousness, depression or tearfulness for no apparent reason, lack of confidence, negative self-image, hostility, and defensiveness.

Behavioural signs - E.g., withdrawn, frequent, unexplained absences, poor concentration, eating disorders, alcohol/substance misuse, evidence of self-harming and disruptive/challenging/bullying behaviour.

General - E.g., frequently “lose” money/possessions, appears tired and lethargic, avoids entering/ leaving gymnastics club with others or playtime.

Preventing Bullying

Bullying in any shape or form is not acceptable at Basingstoke GC and will not be tolerated.

Prevention of bullying

“Think before you speak, if it’s not nice don’t say it, keep your hands to yourself, treat everyone how you want to be treated”.

Staff should be constantly aware that bullying does occur and should be especially vigilant when in the situations and/or places where bullying is most likely to occur.

All staff/officials will take complaints seriously – no matter how trivial they may seem.

The subject of bullying will be raised regularly in training to keep staff and members aware and to encourage a culture where people will tell if they see any bullying behaviour regardless of who the bully is, child or adult. This will also aim to encourage the attitude that we all have responsibility for the safety of others, people feel easy about discussing their experiences or worries about bullying.

Regular discussion on bullying in groups should ensure that the issue is not ignored and that children and young people feel easier about discussing their experiences or worries about bullying.

All young people will be encouraged to seek help from people they trust, *sit with a coach or welfare to talk to someone*, e.g., other members, coaches, staff, parents, etc.

Bullying of Staff

Bullying of staff by members, parent/guardians, or other staff (includes incidents such as Cyber-bullying):

Members of the gymnastics club workforce suffering from or concerned about bullying can contact their line manager, welfare or British Gymnastics for support and advice.

Involving Parents/Guardians

- We will ensure that: Parents/guardians are made aware of any bullying incidents as soon as possible.
- Parents/guardians are kept informed of any further concerns.
- If an incident is to be referred to the gymnastics club, the incident will then be within the procedures of the gymnastics club’s anti-bullying policy.

Communication of the policy

Members, parents/guardians, staff, volunteers, and trustees are made aware of the gymnastics club's Anti-Bullying Policy through a variety of means including:

- Board display in the main reception
- Monthly newsletter
- The gymnastics club's Website
- Digital and paper copies are also available on request from the members services team

Useful Websites and Organisations Offering Help and Support: If you do want to speak to someone you know but need help and advice you can contact ring Childline 0800 1111 or contact Kidscape on 0845 120 5204

Websites offering help and advice: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
www.kidscape.org.uk/ www.childline.org.uk/ www.nspcc.org.uk
www.stoptextbully.com www.beyondbullying.com/ www.bbclic.com/
www.bullying.co.uk www.childnet-int.org www.cyberbullying.org
www.chatdanger.com www.thinkuknow.co.uk
<http://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/Bullying/Pages/online-bullying.aspx>

Guidance for Staff/Officials

Watch for early signs of distress in members, sudden changes in attitude, spurious illness, isolation, the desire to remain with adults, often being late for sessions and late training, low self-esteem, bruises and cuts, avoidance of gymnastics club. All of the above may be symptomatic of other problems but may be early signs of bullying.

- Be available and willing to listen. Treat the information seriously.
- Record incidents of bullying precisely and be seen to do this.
- Offer the victim immediate support and help by putting the gymnastics club's procedures into operation.
- Involve the welfare team who would inform the parents/guardians of both the victim and the member who is doing the bullying where appropriate.
- Avoid the "bullying" model when applying sanctions. Do not bully the member who is bullying. Try to negotiate an agreed form of atonement.
- All observed incidents of bullying must be stopped immediately. They must then be dealt with immediately or at a later, more appropriate time.

- Help the member who is bullying to become aware that his/her actions are considered to be bullying and that these are hurtful to the victim. Ascertain wherever possible the reasons why she/he bullies others.
- Bullying is always wrong – a victim of bullying must not be made to feel guilty because she/he is bullied.
- Use peer pressure against bullying behaviour.
- Help members think about strategies to use.
- Ensure that members know what to do when they are bullied.
- Tell the members from day one that bullying is not tolerated in the gymnastics club. Everyone is expected to ensure that it does not happen and has the responsibility to tell – this is not telling tales.
- Cyberbullying - arrange and oversee the removal of inappropriate content (parents/guardians to be made aware). Providers and/or the police may need to assist with this.
- Cyberbullying – be prepared to contact the police regarding any illegal content (including threatening or menacing behaviour).
- Cyberbullying - Confiscate phones while on site that are used to cyberbully.
- Cyberbullying – direct parents/guardians to appropriate sites for further guidance.
- Where appropriate, contact British Gymnastics safeguarding team and outside agencies.

Guidelines for Members

What to do if you think you are being bullied:

- Tell the Welfare team, coach, or any other member of staff in gymnastics club you trust.
- Tell a parent/guardian.
- Tell them again if the bullying does not stop in gymnastics club or if it continues outside gymnastics club.
- Go around with a friend or two.
- Talk to your friends about it and say no to the bully.
- Report instances of cyberbullying which you see or hear about.
- Do not retaliate or respond to upsetting texts.
- Keep hurtful texts and other messages.
- Copy and paste hurtful messages received via MSN and social networking sites.
- Block individuals who upset you.
- Ensure social networking sites are only accessible to invited friends.
- Tell an adult if you know that someone else is being bullied.
- Try not to show you are upset, which although difficult, will help discourage the bully.
- Try to appear confident.

- Just walk past if people call you unpleasant names.
- If you feel threatened walk away.
- Tell yourself you don't deserve to be bullied.

Guidelines for Parents/Guardians

What to do if you think your child is being bullied:

- Watch for signs – not wanting to go to the gymnastics club, minor illnesses, headaches, other pointers, avoiding friends, coming home with bruises or torn clothing, possessions disappearing, becoming upset after using the internet or mobile phone.
- Listen to what your child says, try to establish that the problem really is bullying and not something else.
- Discuss with your child what you can do.
- Contact the Welfare team. Do this for as long as the bullying continues.
- Help your child to deal with the problem by him or herself. Be tactful.
- If your child needs escorting home, meet him or her round the corner, not at the gymnastics club gate.
- Try not to be over-anxious or over-protective. It may sometimes be helpful to talk with the bully's parents/guardians, but before you do this, take advice from the gymnastics club first.
- Do not encourage retaliation. This rarely helps and may only make things worse for your child.
- Children can be called names by peers or members. Usually, these names are used in a humorous way and are not meant to cause offence. If, however, your child is upset about some of the names used, then let the Welfare team know about this.
- Reassure your child if problems occur.
- Learn how your child uses information and communication technology and familiarise yourself with safe practice.