



ANTI BULLYING POLICY

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1. Defining Bullying

Bullying is the **repeated** and **deliberate** act of attempting to harm a person, or a group of people, physically or psychologically. It is not a single disagreement, but a pattern of behaviour intended to cause distress, fear, or injury. Given the vulnerable nature of many of our participants, we consider any repetitive negative behaviour to be extremely serious.

Bullying can manifest in many ways:

- Verbal: Name-calling, persistent teasing, taunting, making offensive remarks, or spreading malicious rumours.
- Physical: Hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, stealing, or damaging personal property.
- Social/Relational: Purposefully excluding someone from a team or activity, spreading malicious gossip, or manipulating social situations to isolate a participant.
- Cyberbullying: Using digital devices, the internet, or social media to send hurtful messages, share embarrassing material, or threaten individuals.
- Discriminatory: Targeting an individual based on their characteristics, such as race, religion, disability, gender, sexuality, or socioeconomic background.

2. Our Approach: A Values-Led and Restorative Stance

We recognise that individuals attending alternative provision may have experienced bullying or may display challenging behaviours themselves due to past trauma or a lack of emotional control. Our approach is founded on restorative practice and the principles embedded in our S.P.O.R.T. values.

A. Prevention and Engagement

We aim to develop a programme climate where positive conduct and mutual respect are the norm through:

1. S.P.O.R.T. Integration: Explicitly teaching and modelling Respect and Self-Regulation as essential requirements for team success. We use practical scenarios within the sports context to equip participants with effective skills for managing frustration and disagreement constructively.
2. Safe Environment: Maintaining robust staff-to-participant ratios, ensuring constant adult supervision, and promoting physical and emotional safety throughout the facility.
3. Life Skills Curriculum: Running regular, trauma-informed sessions that address empathy, healthy boundaries, assertiveness, managing online interactions, and understanding the widespread impact of their behaviour on others.
4. Ownership: Encouraging all participants to take ownership of the learning environment and safely report any incidents they witness or experience.

B. Reporting Procedures

All participants and staff must know how to raise concerns:

- Participants: Are encouraged to report any bullying immediately to any trusted member of staff (coach, mentor, or support staff).
- Staff: Must record all allegations immediately, including full details of when, where, and what happened.

- Zero Tolerance: Any allegation of repeated harmful behaviour is treated with the utmost seriousness and dealt with swiftly.

3. Investigation and Resolution

When a bullying incident is reported, Your Sport Solutions will follow these steps:

1. Immediate Action: Ensure the safety and well-being of the victim and separate the involved parties immediately to prevent further harm.
2. Thorough Investigation: The Programme Lead or designated senior staff member will investigate promptly, interviewing all involved parties (victim, accused, and witnesses) separately. Statements will be recorded using age-appropriate and sensitive questioning techniques.
3. Restorative Focus: We prioritise resolving the harm caused. This restorative process may involve:
 - Helping the individual who bullied to understand the impact of their actions on the victim (empathy building).
 - Implementing a formal resolution meeting (only if appropriate and safe for the victim and all parties agree).
 - Requiring the individual who bullied to repair the damage (e.g., apologising, repairing property).
4. Disciplinary Measures: If the behaviour is severe, persistent, or malicious, sanctions will be applied in line with the Behaviour Policy. Sanctions may include loss of privileges, temporary exclusion from activities, or, in severe cases, the suspension or termination of the placement, following consultation with the Local Authority/Commissioner.
5. Follow-Up: A member of staff will check in with the victim and the individual who bullied regularly over the following weeks to monitor the situation, ensuring the behaviour has stopped and the victim feels safe and secure.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- Participants: Have the responsibility to treat others with Respect, use Self-Regulation to manage frustration, and report any witnessed or experienced bullying promptly.
- Staff and Coaches: Must be vigilant, model positive behaviour, respond immediately to all reports, record incidents accurately, and ensure all responses are consistent with this policy and the participant's Individualised Progress Plan (IPP).
- Parents/Carers: Are asked to collaborate with the provision, discuss the policy at home, and inform the Programme Lead immediately if they suspect or become aware of bullying affecting their child or young person.
- Commissioning Authority/Schools: Will be informed of any serious or persistent bullying incident, particularly if a change in the participant's placement or support package is required.