



Nether Green FC

Antibullying Policy

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Nether Green FC. If bullying does occur, children, young people, or parents should feel confident in reporting it to someone in the club. All incidents will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly and effectively.

We are a "telling" club, which means anyone who knows bullying is happening is expected to report it to the Club Welfare Officer or a committee member.

Nether Green FC is committed to:

- Teaching players to treat one another with respect.
- Providing a friendly, caring, and safe environment.
- Allowing all players to enjoy football in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. It can take many forms:

- **Emotional** – being unfriendly, excluding, sending hurtful texts, tormenting, hiding possessions, threatening gestures.
- **Physical** – pushing, hitting, kicking, punching, any use of violence or threatening behaviour.
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- **Discrimination** – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, homophobic or sexist comments, jokes or derogatory comments about disabilities, religion, beliefs, ethnicity, gender identity or sexual orientation
- **Verbal** – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, derogatory remarks, and or hurtful jokes.

Cyberbullying

Use of technology (phones, messaging apps, social media) to deliberately upset or harass someone. Cyberbullying may appear anonymous, but it is harmful and persistent.

Trolling

Posting deliberately offensive or upsetting content on someone's social media with the intent to cause distress. Trolling can result in legal consequences.

Nether Green FC is committed to addressing online bullying promptly and effectively. Serious incidents may be reported to the police.

The club has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to all issues of bullying.

Signs and Indicators

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- Says he/she/they are being bullied
- Unwilling to go to training sessions

- Withdrawn, anxious, lacking in confidence
- Unexplained injuries or damaged clothing/equipment
- Feels ill before training sessions or matches
- Possessions going missing or repeated requests for money
- Too scared to say what's wrong
- Change in eating or sleeping patterns
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Sudden drop in performance or enjoyment

Extreme signs may include:

- Self-harm or suicidal thoughts
- Aggression or bullying towards others
- Nightmares or stammering

These signs and behaviours may indicate other problems including abuse in the child's home but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Bullying as a result of any form of discrimination

Bullying based on prejudice related to protected characteristics is unacceptable. This includes discrimination due to race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, or ethnicity.

Discriminatory language and behaviour of club members will not be tolerated at Nether Green FC

1. If an incident occurs, members should be informed that such language/behaviour is unacceptable and that the police may be contacted. The law recognises five types of hate crime on the basis of race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and transgender identity. If a member continues to make persistent remarks, they should be removed from the setting and the coach/manager inform the FA (matchday report) and contact the CWO. In a violent situation the police should be rung immediately. If it is a young person making the remarks, their parents should be informed and the CWO contacted so that they can arrange to meet with the player and their parent/carer.

2. If the problem persists and a player continues to use discriminatory language or behaviour they will be dismissed from the team. If it is an adult, depending on the seriousness and circumstances of the incident, the club will impose proportionate interim or disciplinary measures in accordance with its constitution, codes of conduct and applicable FA/County FA procedures. If the County Welfare Officer and/or police have been involved the parent/carer can be banned permanently.

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents of players to the CWO Milena De Felice (welfare-milena@nethergreenfc.co.uk) or the Club Secretary Ed Pinder(nethergreenfc@yahoo.com) and in the FA matchday report if it's an opposition player.
2. Parents should be informed and asked to come and discuss the problem at a meeting with the CWO and team manager. In cases of serious bullying, the incident will be referred to the County FA Welfare Officer for advice and possibly to the Disciplinary Team at the County FA.
3. If necessary and appropriate it will be reported to the Police.

4. The bullying or threats of must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
5. An attempt will be made to help the bully change their behaviour.
6. If mediation fails and the bullying continues the club will take disciplinary action such as banning for a certain period of time or removed from the team.

Recommended club action for players

1. Apologies and reconciliation.
2. CWO to meet or speak with parent and child making the allegation to get details of allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity and agreed by all.
3. CWO and the team manager should meet with the alleged bully and allow them to give their view, minutes should be taken and agreed.
4. If bullying is believed to have taken place the individual should be temporarily suspended while the CWO liaises with the CFA and will consider the possibility of a reconciliation meeting between parties and/or sanctions.
5. The situation should be monitored by the coach and CWO for a given period. If they still persist they can be removed from the team.
6. All coaches involved should be notified of the concerns and the outcome.

In the case of adults reported to be bullying anyone in the club under 18 years

1. The CWO and Club Secretary should always be informed and will advise on action (this may include suspending the individual while investigation takes place) and contact the FA Safeguarding Team and the County Welfare Officer.
2. In the case of a club official the FA may recommend that they do the FA's Safeguarding Children Education Programme.
3. More serious cases will be referred to the Police and/or Children's Social Services.

Prevention

- Nether Green FC endorses and adopts the Respect Code of Conduct which all club members, players and parents/spectators should sign upon joining the club.
- Nether Green FC have a written constitution which includes the Safeguarding Children Policy, the Anti-Bullying Policy for Football Clubs and the Equality Policy, which include what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all club members.
- If issues of bullying arise the CWO will meet with members to discuss the issue openly and constructively.

More information about bullying can be found at:

Guidance and support for adults/parents/carers

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

www.stonewall.org.uk

www.bullying.co.uk

www.kidscape.org.uk

<https://www.togetherai.o/blog/11-ways-parents-can-help-protect-children-from-cyberbullying>

Guidance and support for children and young people

www.youngstonewall.org.uk

www.childline.org.uk

www.youngminds.org.uk

www.themix.org.uk

www.sheffieldfutures.org.uk

www.galop.org.uk – LGBT+ anti-violence charity for those who have experienced domestic abuse, hate crime or sexual violence

<https://mermaidsuk.org.uk> – Helpline for Supporting trans, non-binary and gender-diverse children, young people and their families

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