



Angling Trust

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy and Procedures 2018

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Purpose of this policy

- Everyone involved in angling should be aware of what bullying is.
- All clubs/fisheries/organisations should have an up to date policy identifying how to deal with bullying if it occurs.
- All organisations will take bullying seriously.
- To help prevent bullying from happening within our organisation as much as possible.
- 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 angling.

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.

Every child 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.

Types of Bullying

Bullying can be seen to include:

Verbal: including name calling, teasing, threatening, rumours, sarcasm, racial taunts, homophobic bullying, 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 – being overweight, physically small, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture.

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.

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 the child's online environment. Please see the Social Media Guidance.

Impact of bullying.

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children, young people and vulnerable adults, 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.

Signs of Bullying

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

- 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;
- start 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 or young person's life but the possibility of bullying should be considered.

Homophobic bullying

Lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people may face homophobic bullying. Homophobia is often driven by a lack of understanding that only serves to strengthen stereotypes and can lead to actions that cause LGB people to feel excluded, isolated or undervalued. Sport has to create a positive, welcoming environment that does not tolerate this kind of behaviour.

Procedures

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

Recommended Action

If the club/organisation decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation they should 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 panel from the club/org should meet with the parents/carers and child alleging bullying to obtain exact details of the allegation. The panel should comprise of the club Chair, the Club Welfare Officer (CWO) and one other committee member. Minutes should be taken for clarity; these must be agreed and signed as a true account.
3. The same panel should meet with the alleged bully and 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. Minutes should be taken for clarity; these must be agreed and signed as a true account.
4. If bullying has, in the panel's view, taken place the person should be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension should the bullying continue. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
5. In some cases, the parent/carer of the bully or victim of bullying can be asked to be present at the club with the young person each time they attend, **if appropriate**.
6. The club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not continuing.
7. All coaches/ instructors and volunteers involved with both parties should be made aware of the concerns and sanctions.

Prevention

- The club/organisation will adopt 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.
- All members will sign to accept the club/ centre child protection policy upon joining the club.
- 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.

HELP

KIDSCAPE Anti-Bullying Advice for Parents 020 7823 5430

Family Lives 0808 800 2222

NSPCC 24 hour help line 0808 800 5000