



# **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

(updated June 2020)

## **1. STATEMENT OF INTENT**

The Committee and Officers of Tees Rowing Club (TRC) are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can train in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all members of TRC including rowers, coaches, volunteers, employees, parents and carers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a telling club. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Club Welfare Officer or any committee member.

## **2. WHAT IS BULLYING?**

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Anyone who is bullying needs to learn different ways of behaving.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding kit or equipment, threatening gestures)
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic: because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

## **3. OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY**

- All members, coaches, volunteers, parents and carers should have an understanding of what bullying is and what they should do if bullying arises.
- All members, coaches and volunteers should know what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- As a club we take bullying seriously. Anyone associated with TRC members should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

## **4. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. An adult may be able to hide that they are a victim of bullying, or may display other signs. People should be aware of possible signs of bullying and that they should investigate if a person, be they child or adult:

- Says they are being bullied
- Is unwilling to go to club sessions
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Feels ill before training sessions
- Goes home with clothes torn or possessions damaged
- Has possessions that go "missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

In more extreme cases:

- Starts stammering
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other people e.g. other children, siblings or associates
- Stops eating
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.

These signs and behaviours may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

## **5. PROCEDURES**

1. Report bullying incidents to the Club Welfare Officer or a member of the committee.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to British Rowing's National Lead Safeguarding Officer for advice.
3. Parents/carers should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
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.
7. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue, then TRC will initiate disciplinary action, which will follow the TRC Disciplinary Procedure.

## **6. RECOMMENDED CLUB ACTION**

If TRC decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation, the following procedure will be followed.

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails or is not appropriate, a small independent panel (made up from Chair, Club Welfare Officer, Secretary or committee members) should meet with the parent/carer and child or adult (and carer if appropriate) to obtain more information. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.
3. The same panel should meet with the alleged bully and parent(s) or carer(s) if appropriate, detail the allegation and allow them an opportunity of reply. Minutes should again be taken and agreed.
4. If bullying has in their view taken place, the bully should be advised of this, and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the bullying continues. 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 bullied individual can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
6. All coaches or volunteers involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

### **Outcomes:**

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to apologise
- If possible, the people concerned will be reconciled

- In serious cases, suspension or exclusion will be considered
- Monitoring should be put in place to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

In the case of adults reported to be bullying rowers under 18:

1. British Rowing should always be informed and will advise on action to be taken.
2. It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a coach, child protection awareness training may be recommended. More serious cases may be referred to the police, social services or British Rowing disciplinary procedure.
3. In cases where a member of TRC or a rowing coach is implicated, the matter should be referred to British Rowing.

## **7. PREVENTION**

- TRC has a written club constitution, rules and code of conduct, which include what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members and of which the anti-bullying policy is one part.
- All TRC members, parents and carers will sign to accept the constitution and rules upon joining the club.
- The club welfare officer will raise awareness about bullying and why it matters, and if issues of bullying arise in the club, will consider meeting with rowers to discuss the issue openly and constructively.
- Note: Cases of bullying should be resolved with the utmost speed to avoid further distress to the victim.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Further help and guidance can be obtained from the following:

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| • Children's Legal Centre                   | 0845 345 4345  |
| • KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) | 0845 1 205 204; <a href="http://www.kidscape.org.uk">www.kidscape.org.uk</a> |
| • Parentline Plus                           | 0808 800 2222  |
| • Youth Access                              | 020 8772 9900  |
| • Bullying Online                           | <a href="http://www.bullying.co.uk">www.bullying.co.uk</a>                   |

This policy is based on that provided to schools by KIDSCAPE. KIDSCAPE is a voluntary organisation committed to help prevent child bullying. KIDSCAPE can be contacted on 020 7730 3300.

**Date of this revision: June 2020.**