

# Loughborough Boat Club

## Anti-Bullying Policy

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**Loughborough Boat Club is 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 rowers or parents should be able to report it 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 a Club Welfare Officer (CWO) or any committee member. Whilst this Policy is focused on prevention of bullying of our juniors, it applies equally to adults; bullying of any of our members, or by any of our members will not be tolerated.

### **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 can be:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, including (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.

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Rowers who are bullies need to learn different ways of behaving. This club will respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### **Objectives of this policy**

- All committee members, coaches, rowers and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and what they should do if bullying arises.
- All committee members and coaches should understand the club's policy on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- As a club we take bullying seriously. Rowers and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

**The Club Welfare Officers are Kate Henry and Vicky Haines.**

## Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- says he/she is being bullied
- is unwilling to go to club sessions
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- feels ill before training sessions
- comes home with clothes torn or possessions damaged
- has possessions go “missing”
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay a 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 children or siblings
- 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.

## Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to a Club Welfare Officer or a member of the committee.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to British Rowing for advice.
3. Parents will be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will 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 the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution.

## Recommended club action

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation they will follow the procedure outlined below.

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 panel of three people (made up from President, Club Welfare Officer, Secretary and/or committee members) will meet with the parent and child alleging bullying to get details of the allegation. Minutes will be taken for clarity, which will be agreed by all as a true account.

3. The same three persons will meet with the alleged bully and parent/s and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes will again be taken and agreed.
4. If bullying has in their view taken place the bully will be warned and put on notice of further action, i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the bullying continues. Consideration will be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
5. In some cases the parent of the bully or bullied rower can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The club committee will monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
6. If the bullying involves adults the CWO may choose to implement the Club Grievance and Disciplinary procedure.
7. All coaches involved with both rowers will be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

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

- British Rowing will be informed and consulted on action to be taken.
- It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a teacher or coach, child protection awareness training may be recommended.
- More serious cases may be referred to the police, social services or British Rowing disciplinary procedure.
- In cases where a coach or teacher who is employed by an outside organisation is implicated the matter will be referred to British Rowing and to the person's line manager or as detailed in that person's employment contract.

Cases of bullying will be resolved with the utmost speed to avoid further distress to the victim. As a minimum the Club will adhere the guidelines for timescales in Section 8 of the *Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy*.

## **Prevention**

The club has a written constitution, which includes what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members of which the anti-bullying policy is one part.

All rowers and parents will sign to accept the constitution 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.

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 0207 730 3300.

Stuart Ward  
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Loughborough Boat Club