

# LINLITHGOW SPORTS CLUB

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### Statement of Intent

This Linlithgow Sports Club (LSC) will not tolerate bullying.

The LSC is committed to providing a caring, friendly, safe environment for all our members so they can play sport in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Bullying is unacceptable, if bullying does occur, the LSC shall ensure that such incidents are dealt with promptly and effectively

### 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 carried out by children or adults.

Bullying can have lots of different forms:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g., hiding rackets/other 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 focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

### Why care about bullying?

Bullying is a serious problem and members have a right to stop it

Bullying hurts, no one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

LSC Board of Management (BOM), members, coaches, employees, who are bullying need to learn a different way of behaving.

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

### Objectives of this Policy

- To ensure that the LSC searches out and responds to reports of bullying and deals with such issues in a prompt, fair and timely manner
- All LSC BOM, members, coaches and employees shall fully understand this policy and apply it when bullying is reported.
- Members and parents shall be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported

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### How to spot bullying?

A child might show that he or she is being bullied in lots of ways. The LSC BOM, members, coaches, employees and parents should be aware of the possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- Says he or 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- Becomes withdrawn anxious or lacking in confidence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 torn/damaged clothes or damaged possessions
- Has possessions “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 unlikely explanations for any of the above

In more extreme cases

- Starts stammering
- Cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Attempt or threatens suicide or runs away

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

### Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to the Club Welfare Officer or a member of the BOM
2. In cases of serious bullying, the Club Welfare Officer will contact the appropriate sport governing body 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 and/or the Social Services will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour and threats of bullying will be investigated and bullying will be stopped as quickly as possible.

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6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies), by them attending anti-bullying training sessions, to change their behaviour, however, termination/suspension of membership will also be considered where there have been serious acts of misconduct.

### **In the case of a child reported to be bullying a person under 18yrs or a vulnerable adult**

If it is decided that it is appropriate for the LSC to deal with the situation, they will follow the procedure outlined below.

1. A small panel (made up from the LSC Secretary, Welfare Officer and other BOM members) will meet with parent(s), or a third-party witness and the complainant to get details of the allegation, minutes will be taken and agreed.
2. The same panel will meet with the alleged offender and parent(s), put the allegation to them, and ask them to give their view, minutes will be taken and agreed.
3. If bullying has, in the panel's view, taken place, they will consider whether it is serious enough to take disciplinary action immediately according to the Club's Constitution, i.e., suspension or termination of membership
4. If disciplinary action is not taken immediately, the member will be warned and put on notice of further action i.e., suspension or termination of membership if the bullying continues.
5. In some cases the parents of the offender and the offender can be asked to attend anti bullying training sessions, the BOM will monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not repeated, however, if they do not accept this arrangement the bully will have their club membership, either suspended or terminated
6. The panel's decision will be confirmed in writing to both parties and if either party is dissatisfied with decision, they have the right to appeal to the LSC President within one week of the written decision.
7. All coaches, and other interested parties, will be made aware of the concerns and outcomes of this process.

### **In the case of an adult reported to be bullying person under 18yrs or vulnerable adult**

If it is decided that it is appropriate for the LSC to deal with the situation, they will follow the procedure outlined below.

1. A small panel (made up from the LSC Secretary, Welfare Officer and other BOM members) will meet with parent(s)), or a third-party witness and the complainant to get details of the allegation, minutes will be taken and agreed.

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2. The same panel will meet with the alleged offender and a third-party witness acting on behalf of the alleged offender, the allegation will be put to him/her and will ask for their version of events, minutes will be taken and agreed.
3. If bullying has, in the panel's view, taken place, they will consider whether it is serious enough to take disciplinary action immediately according to the Club's Constitution, i.e., suspension or termination of membership
4. If disciplinary action is not taken immediately, the offender will be warned and put on notice of further action i.e., suspension or termination of membership if the bullying continues.
5. In some cases the offender can be asked to attend anti bullying training sessions, the BOM will monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not repeated, however, if they do not accept this arrangement the offender will have their club membership, either suspended or terminated
6. The panel's decision will be confirmed in writing to both parties and if either party is dissatisfied with decision, they have the right to appeal to the LSC President within one week of the written decision.
- 7.. All coaches, and other interested parties, will be made aware of the concerns and outcomes of this process.
8. If the person accused of bullying a child or vulnerable adult is an employee of the LSC, the LSC will regard the incident as a disciplinary issue and will follow the disciplinary procedure set out for employees
9. If the nature of the complaint is with regard to a member of LSC BOM, the complainant has the right to report the discrimination or harassment directly to their Club registered body.

### Prevention

- The Welfare Officer will consider meeting with LSC members if bullying becomes an issue at the Club, to discuss the issue openly and constructively, seeking support from the appropriate Sport Governing Body as necessary.

The LSC Welfare is Laurie McKerrow

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I have read and agree to abide with the requirements set out in the Linlithgow Sports Club Anti-Bullying Policy, dated 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021

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