

Anti-Bullying Policy

2023/24 Season



1. Introduction. Vulcan Football Club acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care and is committed to working to provide a safe environment for all members.

2. Scope of Policy. 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 persistent sending of hurtful text messages and persistent tormenting, (e.g. hiding football boots/shin guards, 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. Individuals who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

We have a collective responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to any issues of bullying.

3. Policy Objectives.

1. All club members, coaches, officials and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is
2. All club members, officials and coaching staff should know what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported
3. All players and parents should know what the club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises
4. As a club we take bullying seriously. Players and parents should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported
5. Bullying will not be tolerated

4. Signs and Indicators. 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 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- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence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 clothes torn or training equipment damaged
- Has possessions go "missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises



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In more extreme cases, indicators could include:

- 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.

5. Club Bullying Procedure.

1. Report bullying incidents to the Club Welfare Officer or a member of the clubs management committee or contact the County FA Welfare Officer.
2. In cases of serious bullying, incidents will be referred to the County FA Welfare Officer for advice and possibly to The FA Case Management Team.
3. Parents should 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 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 the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club's Disciplinary Policy.

In the case of adults reported to be bullying anyone

1. The County FA Welfare Officer should always be informed and will advise on action to be taken where appropriate.
2. It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a team manager, official or coach, The FA's Safeguarding Children Education Programme may be recommended.
3. More serious cases may be referred to the Police and/or Children's Services.

6. Bullying Prevention Approach.

1. Vulcan Juniors has Codes of Conduct in place for all players, parents and club officials, which includes what is acceptable and proper behaviour, of which anti-bullying is one part.
2. All club members and parents will sign to accept the Code of Conduct upon joining the club.
3. 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 members to discuss the issue openly and constructively.

7. Club Response to Bullying Report.

If Vulcan Juniors decide it is appropriate to deal with a bullying situation we will follow the procedure outlined below:

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails / is not appropriate, a small panel (made up from Chairman, Club Welfare Officer, Secretary, 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 individual will be warned 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 of the bully or bullied player 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. All coaches involved with both individuals will be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

8. Contacts and Additional Resources

Further advice Bullying and Safeguarding Children matters can be obtained from the clubs Child Welfare Officer or the County Football Association's Welfare Officer (Liverpool County FA):

- Helen McCue, Club Welfare Officer - safeguarding@vulcanjuniorsfc.co.uk
- Lisa Morrison, Liverpool County Football Association's Welfare Officer - **0151 523 4488 (204)** or Lisa.Morrison@LiverpoolFA.com
www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

See also the club's Safeguarding Policy.



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