



SANDBACH GYMNASTICS FOUNDATION

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying by children or adults on children within Sandbach Gymnastics must never be tolerated. All forms of bullying are taken seriously and responded to appropriately in accordance with the following minimum standards.

Bullying is behaviour, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group; physically or emotionally. There is often a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim/s to prevent or deal with the perpetrator's actions. The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children and young people, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm).

Bullying can occur between:

- An adult and child/young person.
- A child/young person and child/young person.
- A parent and their own child.

Bullying may take many forms and may be conducted in person or through the actions of another person/other people.

These include:

- **Emotional:** Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g., hiding belongings, threatening gestures), name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing/taunts, graffiti.
- **Physical:** Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- **Sexual:** Unwanted physical contact or sexually offensive comment/s.
- **Cyber:** Email, Social Media and internet chat room misuse, mobile phone threats by text messaging and calls or misuse of technology (i.e., photographs/ video footage).

Bullying may also take the form of singling out individuals because they belong to a particular group or are different in some way from others (prejudice-based bullying) and may include:

- **Racist** and religious based bullying.
- **Homophobic/ bi-phobic/ trans-phobic:** Because of their sexual orientation, or perceived, or actual gender identity.
- **Disablist:** May focus on, or exploits, a particular aspect of the individual's disability.

It is acknowledged that the competitive nature of sport can result in tensions that may lead to bullying, but bullying cannot be condoned in any circumstance. Examples of bullying in gymnastics could be:

- A gymnast who intimidates fellow gymnasts inappropriately.
- A coach who adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy.
- A parent who pushes too hard.
- An official who places unfair pressure on a person.

Strategies to Discourage Bullying

- We have an open and transparent environment and always provide supervision.
- We encourage children to speak out and share any concerns with the coach in charge, the Club and the Welfare Officer or other responsible adults.
- We take all signs or allegations of possible bullying seriously.

Responding to Victims of Bullying

- Anyone becoming aware that a child or young person is being bullied, will offer reassurance, and try to gain their trust.
- We will explain that someone in authority may need to be informed.
- We will keep records of what happened and what was said, together with names of those involved and any action taken.
- We will report suspicions or concerns to the person in charge.

Confronting the Bully(ies)

- In a case where a child or vulnerable adult is or has been bullied by another child or person, we will inform the bully's parents or carer.
- We will liaise with parents and carers of all parties involved to discuss and seek a solution.
- If applicable we will invite all parties involved to attend the centre to discuss how the situation may be resolved
- In circumstances where items have been borrowed, we will ask that any borrowed items are returned immediately.
- We may find it necessary to impose sanctions or disciplinary action if necessary.
- We will report and record all actions taken.
- We will provide support for the victim and his/her coach.
- We will encourage the bully (or bullies) to change his/her behaviour.

Supporting the Bullied

Children and vulnerable adults that have been bullied will often need support from club officers to deal with the impact of bullying. This may include having a specific person to whom concerns can be raised in specific situation or providing a named senior gymnast as a “buddy”.

- They may need support external to the club from parents, other relatives and sometimes schoolteachers.
- The club may consider holding a reconciliation meeting to help address the issues between the bully and the bullied person.
- The club can advise the child, young person(s) or parent(s) to contact either:
- Kidscape (Email info@kidscape.org.uk or call 0207730 3300), a charity that offers support to bullied children, as well as day courses to help them deal with bullying and its aftereffects including how to avoid being bullied in future.
- Anti-Bullying Alliance. A coalition of organisations and individuals that are united against bullying.

Adapted and adopted from British Gymnastics Safeguarding Policies