

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in fencing and at our club; Herefordshire Fencing Club has a zero-tolerance policy with regard to bullying. All members of the club have a responsibility to work together to stop bullying and safeguard all members from harm. All members must respect the views and feelings of others even if they are different from their own.

If bullying does occur, all members should be aware of the club's policies on how we deal with such incidents. All reports of bullying should be dealt with promptly, effectively and professionally. If anyone witnesses any incidents of bullying or has any concerns then they should notify the welfare officer immediately or another member of the committee if unable to notify the welfare officer.

## What is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of intimidation, coercion or aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying can result in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. 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
- Cyber -
  - Any issues relating to the internet, such as social media, email & internet chat room misuse.
  - Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
  - Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying? Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and Bullying will not be tolerated.

## Club Procedures

- Report bullying incidents to the club welfare officer, a member of the club committee or an adult you can trust.
- The bullying behaviour, or threats of bullying, must be investigated fairly and the bullying stopped quickly.
- Any barriers to reporting bullying will be taken note of and addressed to ensure everyone has the same opportunities to participate in a safe environment and the same ability to report any concerns.

- Reconciliation can be used as a method of resolution depending on the situation. Getting the parties together and facilitating an apology should be conducted by a neutral party with skills in mediation and restorative processes and the negotiation should not take place if it causes any undue harm to either party (a full risk assessment should take place prior to the meeting).
- If this fails or is not appropriate, a small panel of club officers will meet with the adult, or if a minor the parent and child, making the allegation to obtain more information. This panel must include the Welfare Officer (unless the target of the allegation). Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.
- The same panel will meet with the alleged bully and parent/s, detail the allegation and allow them an opportunity of reply. Minutes should again be taken and agreed.
- If it is considered that bullying has taken place, a plan must be agreed to tackle the bullying. The individual will be warned and put on notice of further action if the bullying continues and if any sanctions have been agreed. The club committee will monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not repeated.
- An attempt will be made to help the perpetrator of the bullying change their behaviour.
- If mediation fails and the bullying continues further disciplinary action will be taken. All sanctions will be proportionate and fair.
- All appropriate coaches, volunteers or team managers involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning and if any measures can be put in place to minimise the risk of repetition.

### Useful Contacts

Herefordshire Fencing Club Welfare Officers - Silvia Baba-Neal ([silviab14@yahoo.com](mailto:silviab14@yahoo.com)) and Sophie Townsend ([sophie.townsend123@gmail.com](mailto:sophie.townsend123@gmail.com))

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

Childline 0800 1111 / [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Kidscape [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

Anti-Bullying Alliance [www.antibullyingalliance.org](http://www.antibullyingalliance.org)

British Fencing Welfare Officer - Liz Behnke ([equality@britishfencing.com](mailto:equality@britishfencing.com))