



GJIHC Bullying Policy September 2021

Guildford Junior Ice Hockey Club

Anti-Bullying Policy

We are committed to providing a caring, respectful, friendly and safe environment for all our members and junior players under 18 years old. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our Club. If bullying does occur, all Club members or junior players should be able to bring it to the attention of the Club and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

This policy refers to the Equality Act 2010, because we are committed to preventing and responding effectively to bullying. This includes children who are in vulnerable groups including disabled children, children with SEN, those who are or are perceived to be LGBTQ+, race and religion targeted.

Club Objectives

Bullying will not be tolerated.

As a Club we take bullying seriously. Members and junior players should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

All Club members should have an understanding of what bullying is and have an appreciation of the signs and indicators of bullying.

All Club members should know what the Club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

Club officials and coaches will role model acceptable behaviour.

Prompt and appropriate response is given to all complaints of bullying.

All complainants are protected from victimisation as a result of making the complaint.

Complaints are handled sensitively and confidentially.

Complaints made in good faith will not in themselves be seen as bullying or harassment.

This policy and its effectiveness will be kept under review by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in association with the Executive Committee.

Definition

The Club defines bullying as behaviour that *contains all three* of the points below:

- Behaviour – deliberately hurtful behaviour by a person or group of people,
- Happens more than once, over a period of time – there may be a pattern of behaviour, not necessarily an isolated incident, and
- Involves an imbalance of power or perpetrator behaviour - where it is difficult for victims to defend themselves.

Bullying is characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

It is not bullying when:

- It is the first hurtful incident between individuals
- Teasing/banter between friends without intention to cause hurt
- Falling out between friends after a quarrel, disagreement or misunderstanding
- Conflict that got out of hand

As a Club we recognise that bullying can be:

Non-verbal, verbal, physical, harassment, sexist bullying, sexual bullying, racist bullying, or bullying of disabled individuals, sexual orientation bullying or transphobic bullying. The Club also recognises and will act upon online bullying:

The following are some examples (but not an exhaustive list):

Non-verbal

- Excluding or ignoring someone
- Withholding essential information
- Setting impossible/ unreasonable tasks
- Deliberate wrongful attribution of blame

Verbal

- Shouting, swearing, abuse, malicious gossip, assigning unwanted nicknames
- Victimising or singling out someone for different treatment
- Frequent unwarranted criticism or deliberate undermining of someone
- Public reprimand/humiliation, ridicule, sarcasm
- Belittling or patronising comments
- Making physical or psychological threats

Physical

- Striking or hitting
- Grabbing a person or their clothes
- Pushing, jostling or prodding
- Practical jokes or initiations
- Rifling, damaging or stealing personal possessions

Harassment:

- ‘Unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating people’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment’ (Equality Act 2010). Harassment can take many forms; for example verbal and/or written abuse, ignoring or subjugating team mates/colleagues to unwanted attention, ridiculing and humiliating them in front of others, mocking, mimicking or belittling a person.

Sexist bullying:

- Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying:

- Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Racial bullying:

- Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour.

Bullying of disabled individuals:

- Bullying based on prejudices towards disabled individuals.

Sexual orientation bullying:

- Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying:

- Bullying based on another person’s actual or perceived transgender identity or gender variance, or for not conforming to traditional gender stereotypes.

Cyberbullying:

- where messages of an intimidating, humiliating or threatening nature have been sent or left on a social networking site, or messages sent on eMail, text, or mobile messaging Apps.

Indicators that a *player* is being bullied may include:

- Says they is being bullied;
- Is unwilling to go to training sessions;
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence;
- Feels ill before training sessions;
- Has possessions that go 'missing';
- Is frightened to say what is wrong.

While these may indicate other problems, bullying should be considered a possibility.

Care of duty and responsibilities of the Club

What members of the Club must do to prevent bullying:

Members and junior players will

1. Treat each other with respect.
2. Empathise that everyone is different (Equality Act 2010).
3. Watch out for signs that someone is being bullied.
4. Tell a trusted adult/member and get help.

Victims will

1. Tell someone if they think they have been bullied as soon as possible.
2. Make sure that they understand what bullying is.
3. Not retaliate.

Bystanders will

1. Not get involved in the incident, for example, by encouraging the bullying behaviour.
2. Tell someone, get help.

Club officials will

1. Deal with bullying behaviour when someone tells you that they or someone else has been bullied.
2. Be aware for signs that someone is being bullied and how this might present itself.
3. Player incidents of bullying should be reported to a Team Manager in the first instance, and where deemed serious bullying, be referred to the Head Coach and DSL
4. Club officials and/or parent incidents of bullying should be referred to one or more of the Ice Hockey Coordinator, Club Secretary and DSL for the Club. Officials need to be alert to conflicts of interest in any investigations of complaints.

Executive Committee will

1. Keep up-to-date with what is going on in our Club about bullying.
2. Check that the bullying is being dealt with and keep a record of bullying incidents.

Parents will

1. Make sure they understand what bullying is.
2. Listen to their child and watch out for signs that they are being bullied.
3. Encourage children to tell the whole story about what has happened.
4. Work with the Club, if their child has been bullying others, for advice and support in order to help stop bullying.

We agree that people who bully others may have problems too; they may need our help. People sometimes bully others because they feel sad about something. It can be their way of taking anger, guilt or sadness out on someone else. These members or junior players will:

1. Admit that they have been bullying another person.
2. Agree to get help.
3. Put the situation right as soon as possible.

Club procedures:

The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and documented and an attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

Formal complaints should be made in writing (physically or digitally) wherever possible. If there's a reason why a complainant cannot make their complaint in writing, they can make it orally (e.g. to a Team Manager who can document it for them and for the sake of clarity, ask the complainant to check it is an accurate record of the conversation).

The complaint should include:

- complainant's full name, and
- a summary of the complaint, including details such as dates / times and any prior incidents.

Investigating a complaint:

An investigation by the relevant Club officials is primarily an information gathering exercise and should therefore:

- gather all the facts, and
- seek the views of those involved.

The Club officials managing the complaint should then decide on the outcome of the complaint based on the findings of their investigation and in accordance with and informed by the Clubs policies. There may be circumstances where the officials are unable to determine the outcome of individual aspects of a complaint. However, the complaint should either be *upheld, partially upheld* or *not upheld*, with recommendations on the actions to be taken based on this decision. This could include mediation. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue, disciplinary action may be taken.

Following the investigation, the complainant (or parent/guardian of junior players) should be notified in writing (physical or digital) of the outcome of the investigation and any steps which will be taken as a result of the complaint.

All written responses should be given careful consideration before being sent.

The response to the complainant should:

- clearly state if the complaint is to be upheld, partially upheld or not upheld and the reasons that led to this decision referencing, where possible, all the key issues raised by the complainant based on the findings of the investigation.
- identify recommendations that will be undertaken based on the outcome of the complaint in the spirit of continuous improvement.
- identify who the appropriate Club official the complainant can appeal to if they're unhappy with the process undertaken or the outcome of the complaint and how they can be contacted.

Serious cases of bullying may be referred to the Police/Social services.

Prevention:

The Club has a written Constitution and Codes of Conduct that cover what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members.

All Club members and parent/carers will sign an acceptance of the Constitution and relevant Code of Conduct on joining the Club.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will raise awareness about bullying and, if issues of bullying arise in the Club, will consider meeting with members to discuss the issue openly and constructively.

Review of policy:

Every 12 months, or; Following any legislative changes, or; Following any learning by the Club.