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**DEEPING UNITED ANTI BULLYING POLICY**

Deeping United are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can participate in football in a relaxed and secure atmosphere, be able to learn, make mistakes, enjoy and develop. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all club members or parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING club. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the club welfare officer or any committee member.

**Objectives of this policy**

All club members, coaches, officials and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.

All club members, officials and coaching staff should know what the club policy is on

bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.

All players and parents should know what the club policy is on bullying, and what they

should do if bullying arises or is reported to them.

As a club we take bullying seriously. Players and parents should be assured that they would

be supported when bullying is reported.

**Bullying will not be tolerated at Deeping United.**

**What is bullying?**

Bullying is the use of physical or verbal aggression with the intention of hurting another person. It can also arise through causing psychological distress by deliberately excluding or belittling others.

Bullying can be:

Emotional being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text

messages and 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

Being made to feel excluded, left out, blamed or victimised

**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Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence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

Is frightened to say what’s wrong

Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

**Procedures**

1. Report bullying incidents to the Club Welfare Officer or a member of the clubs committee

or contact the County FA Welfare Officer as soon as possible.

2. In cases of serious or sustained bullying, the 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) recognise and address their behaviour.

7. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will initiate disciplinary action

under the club discipline policy

**In the case of adults reportedly 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.

**Prevention**

1. The club will have a written code of conduct, which includes what is acceptable and proper

behaviour for all members of which the anti-bullying policy 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(s) 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.

**Recommended Club Action**

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation they should 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/not appropriate a small panel (made up from Chairman, Club Welfare Officer,

Secretary and committee members) should meet with the parent and child alleging bullying

to get details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed

by all as a true account.

3. The same three persons should 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 should

again be taken and agreed.

4. If bullying has in their view taken place the individual should 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 should monitor

the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.

6. All coaches involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and

outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

**For further information or to report an incident, please contact our welfare officer, Amanda Sylvester 07976 557041 or any committee member in Amanda’s absence.**

**You will also find further additional documentation on the club website and a witness statement you can use to record the details of any incident.**

**Any additional information and the witness statement should be sent to welfare@deepingunitedfc.com.**