



Merseyside Nighthawks

Anti-Bullying

Policy and Procedure
SOP-WEL-002

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0. Introduction

Merseyside Nighthawks are committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment, one that encourages the companionship of sport, and allows individuals to reach their full potential. To this end, we operate a strict no bullying policy throughout the organisation.

This policy outlines bullying, the steps we make in order to prevent bullying within the organisation, and the procedure for reporting bullying.

1. Bullying and types of bullying

Bullying is the repetitive attempt to seek harm, intimidate or coerce an individual or a group of people. Usually, but not always, an imbalance of power between victim(s) and abuser(s) may add further leverage to bullying. Bullying can occur in person, or in absence and take many different forms.

Verbal – name calling, persistent mocking, taunting and threats of violence.

Physical – physical violence, intimidating behaviour, theft or intentionally damaging possessions.

Emotional – tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, excluding, framing, spreading rumours.

Cyberbullying - the misuse of digital technology or communication platforms to bully an individual or group through actions that are intended to threaten, cause offence, anxiety or humiliation.

Examples can include:

Abusive comments – facilitating rumours, trolling, threats.

Hacking – illegally accessing, or accessing without permission, an individual's email, phone, computer or online profiles, with the intent to extract and share personal information or content.

Sharing content – Sharing pictures, videos or personal information without the individual's consent, with the intent of causing harm or humiliation.

Forced coercion – Pressurising someone to do something they don't want to do, such as sharing explicit content.

Online Shaming – Creating groups or websites with the intention to mock or spread malicious content about an individual.



2. Roles and Responsibilities of those within the Merseyside Nighthawks

Preventing and managing instances of bullying is the responsibility of every person in the Merseyside Nighthawks. As an organisation, we commit to the following:

- Promote and implement this anti-bullying policy in addition to our safeguarding policy and procedures.
- We take a strict no bullying stance, ensuring that bullying of any kind is not tolerate or condoned.
- Take action to investigate and respond to any reports of bullying.
- Encourage everyone to take an active role in developing and adopting a code of conduct for behaviour.
- Ensure that a framework and process is in place for the reporting of bullying, one that is easily accessible and safe for all within the organisation.
- Ensure that training and guidance is given on bullying and that everyone is signed up to this policy.
- Parents and/or care givers will be advised on our bullying policy and actively communicated to during any investigations.
- Support will be offered to parents and/or care givers where instances of bullying occur.
- Parents and/or caregivers will be consulted on any actions to be taken.

Staff and coaches are, in many instances, the first contact point for a person who wishes to report bullying, or may witness bullying themselves. Every staff member, coach and volunteer will commit to the following:

- Encourage individuals to speak out about bullying behaviour.
- Respect every person's right to be a part of this organisation, were safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect the feelings, values and opinions of other people.
- Respect the equality of all.
- Ensure rules and practices are explained and understood by all.



- Acknowledge that our differences make each of us special and valuable.
- Report instances of bullying behaviour they see.
- Operate an open-door policy, where anyone can feel safe in communicating their concerns.
- Reports of bullying will be listened to and taken seriously.

3. Reporting possible instances of bullying

There may be a time when you become concerned that bullying is taking place within the organisation. This may be a result of your observations, or information from the victim or a third party. It is not your responsibility to decide whether bullying has taken place. It is however everyone's responsibility to respond to and report concerns. The following are intended as guidelines to deal with such situations:-

- *How to respond to a concern*
 - Make a note of your concern. An incident reporting form can be found in appendix 1 of SOP-WEL-001 (Safeguarding Policy and Procedures).
 - Make a note of what you observed or what the person has said using his or her own words as soon as practicable. Complete the Incident Form and submit to the Merseyside Nighthawks Welfare Director, Welfare Officer or Welfare team.
 - Contact the Merseyside Nighthawks Welfare Director or a member of the Welfare team as soon as possible or immediately after submitting your report.
 - Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about.
 - Take care to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. It is important that the information you have is accurate.
 - Be mindful of the need to be confidential at all times, this information must only be shared with your Lead Welfare Director and others on a need to know basis.
 - If the matter is urgent and relates to the immediate safety of an individual at risk then contact the emergency services immediately.



4 . Important contacts

- Merseyside Nighthawks Welfare Director:** - Ash Marsden
Tel: 07762123101
Email: Welfare@mnighthawks.org
- Merseyside Nighthawks Managing Director :** - Andy Taylor
Email: ManagingDirector@MNighthawks.org
- Merseyside Nighthawks Chairperson:** - Arron Harrison
Email: Chairperson@MNighthawks.org
- British American Football Association** - Web: <https://www.britishamericanfootball.org/>
Email: safeguarding@britishamericanfootball.org
- Merseyside Safeguarding Adults Board** - Tel: 0345 140 0845
Web:
<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/safeguardingadults~>
- NSPCC** - Tel: 0808 800 5000
Email: help@nspcc.org.uk
- Merseyside Police** - Tel: 101
Web: <https://www.merseyside.police.uk>
Emergency Tel: 999
- Crimestoppers** - Tel: 0800 555 111
Web: <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>