



Aylesbury Cheerleading Academy Anti-Bullying Policy

Aims:

At Aylesbury Cheerleading Academy, we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our athletes to allow them to train effectively, improve their skills and help them maximise their potential. We believe that all bullying behaviour is unacceptable. We expect athletes to feel safe in the gym and at competitions. We want them to understand issues relating to safety, such as bullying, and know how to seek support from the programme should they feel unsafe. We aim to continue to develop and maintain a community that is free from bullying. If bullying occurs it is dealt with swiftly and sensitively. We aim to identify incidents of bullying at an early stage and to take them seriously. Evidence is taken impartially and acted upon, with the issue and behaviour being addressed.

What Is Bullying?

We say a child is being bullied or picked on when another child or group of children, repeatedly say nasty and unpleasant things to him or her. It is also bullying when a child is hit, kicked, threatened, locked inside a room, sent nasty notes/texts, when no-one ever talks to them etc. These things can be difficult for the child being bullied to defend him or herself. It is also bullying when a child is teased repeatedly in a nasty way. It is not bullying when two children occasionally argue or have a disagreement.

Recognising Bullying:

Children who are bullied may be reluctant to tell. When a disclosure is made, it should be treated seriously and investigated, checking with colleagues and maintaining rigorous vigilance. By taking an active interest in children's social lives, signs of distress are likely to be noted.

Signs of bullying might include:

- unwillingness to come to training
- withdrawn, isolated behaviour
- complaining about missing possessions
- refusal to talk about the problem
- being easily distressed
- incontinence

If difficulties are associated with a child from a minority racial or cultural background; a child with SEN; or where there are indications of sexual harassment, these indicators may well confirm bullying is occurring.

Definitions of the different types of bullying:

Physical Bullying:

Physical bullying occurs when a person uses overt bodily acts to gain power over peers. Physical bullying can include kicking, punching, hitting or other physical attacks.

Verbal Bullying:

Verbal bullying occurs when someone uses language to gain power over his or her peers. The verbal bully makes use of relentless insults and teasing to bully his or her peers. For instance, a verbal bully may make fun of a peer's lack of physical capabilities, may tease a peer for being a "dummy" or "nerd", and/or may call a peer names based on appearance.

Verbal bullies are one of the more difficult types of bullies to identify since their attacks tend to only occur when adults are not present. Even though verbal bullying creates no physical damage, this type of abuse can have lasting psychological impacts on victims.

Relational Bullying:

Relational Aggression (R.A.) is a form of bullying common among tweens, and especially teen girls. The behaviour describes an individual, or a group of individuals, who try to hurt a peer, or sacrifice another's standing within their peer group. Girls who exhibit Relational Aggression are sometimes referred to as Mean Girls.

Cyber Bullying:

Cyberbullying is the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, or target another person. By definition, it occurs among young people.

SEND Related Bullying (Special Education Needs or disabled children):

The research that has been conducted on bullying among children with disabilities and special needs indicates that these children may be at particular risk of being bullied by their peers.

Sexist / Transgender Bullying:

Sexist, sexual and trans-phobic bullying occurs when a pupil (or group), usually repeatedly, harms another pupil or intentionally makes them unhappy because of their sex or because they may not be perceived to conform to normal gender roles. The root cause of sexist and sexual bullying is gender inequality.

Homophobic Bullying:

Any hostile or offensive action against lesbians, gay males, bisexual or transgender people, or those perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

Racist Bullying:

Any hostile or offensive action against people because of their skin colour, cultural or religious background or ethnic origin.

Reporting and responding to bullying including Cyber Bullying:

Investigations of bullying will be recorded on a specific bullying report form. All reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated involving all parties. Aylesbury Cheerleading Academy aims to have a clear and well publicised system to report bullying for the whole programme (including athletes, coaching/non-coaching staff and parents/carers) this includes those who are the victims of bullying or have witnessed bullying behaviour (bystanders). Victims and perpetrators will go through

a restorative approach to re-establish well-being between those involved and ensure harmony and safety.

Sanctions imposed: verbal warning, written warning, suspension and exclusion.

Children and young people in the programme:

- If someone is doing or saying something you don't like, put up your hand and say, "Stop that! I don't like it when you say or do that."
- If they continue after you have asked them to stop, tell them you will report them to an adult if they carry on
- Tell an adult if they continue to bully you
- The adult will listen to you and make a note of the details
- The person who is bullying you will be helped to understand what they are doing wrong
- An adult will help you both to work out a way to put things right
- A few sessions after this, the adult will ask you how things are.

Parents/Carers:

- Watch out for signs that your child is unhappy at training, e.g. refusing to attend, appearing withdrawn or sad, loss of appetite, disturbed sleep patterns
- If your child is being bullied, please tell a member of staff or encourage your child to do so, this will be recorded and investigated thoroughly.
- Reassure your child that it is not their fault.
- Look on the anti-bullying websites for advice on how to support your child, e.g. by developing assertiveness and building self-esteem

Bystanders:

- Always report incidents of bullying that you witness.
- Try to support the victim by offering to help them deal appropriately with the bullying behaviour.
- Don't ignore it! All coaching/non-coaching staff/parents need to be vigilant and report any incidents of bullying or suspected bullying immediately first, to the athlete's team coach as appropriate. Incident report forms should be completed in detail to ascertain both party's stories. Bystanders should also be noted and interviewed.

Aylesbury Cheerleading Academy:

- Encourages co-operative training/competing together.
- Uses peer pressure to promote bullying as unacceptable behaviour.
- Encourages children 'to tell'.
- Takes bullying seriously.
- Investigates facts of an incident impartially; take account of evidence and all views- bullies, victims and witnesses will be talked with separately.
- Operates a system of sanctions which reflect the seriousness of the offence.
- Operates a recording and reporting procedure as appropriate to ensure those involved are kept informed.
- Promotes a shared approach with parents /carers.

Procedures once an incident has been reported:

1. The incident will be investigated quickly, fairly and positively – using the 'no blame approach' where suitable - children put forward their point of view without being accused - the bully and the victim should be spoken to separately by their lead coach. All parties produce a written record (an

adult may scribe). Witness information will be obtained where possible. If deemed necessary, discussions with both parties is documented and filed.

2. Children involved in incidents will be informed of the sanctions to be levied and the reasons for them in relation to their behaviour. It may then be appropriate to discuss behaviour together. The bully should reassure the victim that it will not happen again and will be asked to apologise verbally or in writing/picture as appropriate. (Restorative justice approach)

3. All coaching/non-coaching staff who come into contact with the bully and bullied, will be made aware of the problem so that they can monitor behaviour and ensure the safety of the child who has been bullied.

4. The victim will be monitored to ensure that they feel safe and secure. Strategies will be put in place to ensure their self-esteem is not damaged

5. The bully will be helped to recognise their unsociable behaviour and offered support to modify it.

6. Existing disciplinary sanctions are used only with a view to improving the behaviour of those responsible and making the victim feel safe. Allow a 'cooling off' time for children involved if appropriate.

7. If the incidents continue, further interviews/meetings /support counselling will take place with both bully and victim and further sanctions implemented.

8. Exclusion proceedings

9. Incidents of bullying will always be reported to parents / carers.

Recording bullying and evaluating the policy Bullying incidents will be recorded in an incident form. The information stored will be used to ensure individual incidents are followed up. It will also be used to identify trends and inform preventative work within the programme. Support through discussion and role models will be provided for the victim and the bully. This will help both children understand:

- What is bullying
- Why children bully
- Ways to avoid being bullied
- Ways to stand up to bullies
- What to do if it happens again
- Making good choices

These points should be shared with children:

- Tell yourself you don't deserve to be bullied
- Try to show that you are not upset
- Try being assertive - be clear that you don't like what has been done/said and walk away quickly and confidently
- Keep with friends who you can trust
- Show that you and your friends disapprove and speak to them clearly that you are going to report their bullying behaviour
- Talk to a friend or an adult
- Give sympathy and support to a child who may be bullied
- Be careful about teasing or making personal remarks that could be taken as bullying

- Don't stand by and watch - fetch help
- Remember - we are all individuals and different and we should be allowed to be proud of it

Useful websites

www.bullying.co.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

www.kidscape.org.uk

Restorative Approach Strategies/Questions

- What has happened? Listen to both points of view.
- What's the problem here?
- Ask both/all disputants, 'How does that make you feel?'
- How do you think X is feeling?
- Why do you think X is feeling like that?
- What can you/we/your friends do to help X feel better/put things right?
- What can you/we do to stop this from happening again?
- Do you understand that if you keep hurting/teasing/being unkind to someone, even after they have asked you to stop, then that is bullying/racism?
- Would you like this to be happening to you?
- (To victim of unkind behaviour): If someone says or does this to you again, put your hand up, palm facing them, and say in a firm voice, 'Don't say/do that, I don't like it/it hurts/it makes me feel sad!' (Choose most appropriate phrase! Then get the child to practise doing this.)
- (To child accused of aggression/unkindness): If someone says to you 'Don't do that, I don't like it/it makes me feel sad', what would you do?
- Once resolved, both parties discuss what the next progression should be.

In the event that a child or adult is being bullied/harassed/victimised please fill out the following form. You can approach your child's coach, another coach or the ACA Safeguarding Lead- Fay Jeffs - 07702 137641