

Rothwell Harriers & A.C. Anti-Bullying Policy

Aim of policy

Our aim is to create an environment in which athletes can feel confident that Rothwell Harriers is providing a safe and wholesome setting for all participants in the sport of athletics. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can participate in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all athletes 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 and be assured that it will be dealt with in confidence.

Definition

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person either verbally or physically. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically) sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding spikes/clothing, 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 bullying through the means of social media

Expectations

- All committee members, coaches, athletes and club members should have an understanding of what bullying is
- All committee members and coaching staff should know what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported
- All athletes should know what the club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises
- As a club we take bullying seriously. Athletes should be assured that they would be fully supported when bullying is reported
- Bullying will not be tolerated

Key Principles

1. Report bullying incidents to the club welfare officer or a member of the committee
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to UKA for advice
3. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
4. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
5. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour
6. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution.

Code of Practice

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation they should follow the procedure outlined below. Points 1-3 taken from the Code of Conduct

1. Always inform your club welfare officers and committee member of any incidents of inappropriate, disrespectful or abusive language/behaviour. NEVER approach the situation or take matters into your hands, always report to the welfare team or committee. Allow the club to then make necessary investigations and actions.
2. Where the code of conduct has been breached the club will appoint a member of the committee to investigate and make recommendations which could include
 - a) documented warning
 - b) Suspension from the club whilst further investigations take place
 - c) Removal from the club if the issue is serious enough in itself or in escalation from previous incidents
 - d) Other sanction the investigating officer deems relevant and is accepted by the committee
3. Where the club investigates an issue of bullying, the relevant person(s) will always have the right of representation to the investigating officer in writing and may appeal any decision to England Athletics through their appeal process
4. If the committee feel it is appropriate, reconciliation will be attempted by meeting with both parties. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
If this fails or is not deemed appropriate a small panel (made up from Chairman, Welfare Officer, Secretary, Committee Members) should meet with those involved to get details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.
5. The club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
6. All coaches involved with the said athletes should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning once the investigation has been completed.

If you have any questions or need to report something please contact the clubs Welfare Officers or Chairman.

Reviewed and amended by Terry Lacy March 2021 in line with UKA guidance :-

“ANTI-BULLYING POLICY FOR CLUBS” (Issued 2016 reviewed January 2020)

Recommended review date March 2024