



# BOSTON AND DISTRICT ATHLETIC CLUB

OUR PHILOSOPHY - ACCESS FOR ALL - NO BARRIERS

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### **Statement of intent**

Boston and District Athletic Club is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our members so they can participate in an inclusive sport where everyone belongs and can flourish.

Bullying can be defined as repeated behaviour which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically and is often aimed at certain people because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation, or any other aspect such as appearance or disability.

This statement relates to both online and face to face bullying. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. Bullying takes many forms but ultimately it is the perception of the victim that determines whether or not they are being bullied rather than the intention of the bully. We expect that all volunteers and staff will work together to prevent and reduce bullying.

If bullying does occur, everyone should be able to speak up and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the club welfare officer, committee member, competition provider or England Athletics.

### **What is bullying?**

- Physical bullying, hitting, slapping, or pushing someone
- Verbal; name calling, gossiping, or threatening someone
- Non – verbal abuse; hand signs or text messages
- Emotional abuse; threatening, intimidating, or humiliating someone
- Undermining, constant criticism or spreading rumours
- Controlling or manipulating someone
- Making silent, hoax or abuse calls

The following types of bullying are also hate crimes:

- Racial, sexual, transphobic, or homophobic bullying
- Bullying someone because they have a disability.

## **What is cyber bullying?**

Bullying which is carried out over the internet/social media, such as:

- A peer who intimidates using a social networking website such as
  - A coach who sends negative feedback about a participant via personal text message
  - A club member who posts negative comments about a fellow member on a club forum.
- Cyber Bullying may also include threats, sexual remarks and hate speech.

E-Bullies may publish personal contact information of their victims at websites. They may attempt to act as the victim for the purpose of publishing material in their name that would defame or ridicule them.

Cyber Bullying is particularly serious due to the nature in which the abuse occurs. It can be very personal and take place in a closed private format where the victim may feel isolated, and the content will not be viewed by parents, friends or siblings. Alternatively, it could take place in a public format. It may lead to the victim rereading any material in private perhaps leading to feelings of paranoia, depression, or loneliness.

## **Procedures**

1. Report bullying incidents to the Club Welfare Officer or a member of the club's committee.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to UK Athletics Safeguarding team for advice.
3. Parents/carers should be informed and may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, the police may 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) change their behaviour.
7. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution.

## **Recommended club action**

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation they should follow the procedure outlined below:

### **Child to Child Bullying**

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails/is not appropriate, the Welfare Officer or appropriate Committee Member should meet with the parent/carer 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 person should meet with the alleged bully and parent/carer 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.
5. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
6. In some cases the parent/carer 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.
7. All coaches involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

### **Adult to Child bullying**

1. This should be treated as a Safeguarding matter and UK Athletics be informed and will advise on action to be taken where appropriate. This may include action by The UK Athletics Safeguarding Team.
2. It is likely that this will be investigated as a breach of the Code of Conduct as per the club Disciplinary Policy.
3. More serious cases may be referred to the Police and/or Children's Social Care.

## **Adult to Adult bullying**

1. This should be treated as an internal complaint of misconduct. A written complaint should be obtained from the victim by the Club Secretary and if considered valid the alleged bully should be asked for a written response.
2. Mediation and an early resolution with agreement to cease the behaviour may be possible.
3. If mediation does not work or is not appropriate, the complaint will then be investigated as a breach of the Code of Conduct as per the club Disciplinary Policy.
4. More serious cases may be referred to England Athletics/Police.

## **PREVENTION**

- The club will have a written constitution, which includes what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members, of which the Anti-Bullying Policy is one part.
- All club members and parents/carers will sign to accept the constitution and the relevant code of conduct upon joining the club.
- The Club Welfare Officer 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.

## **Related policies and procedures**

Club Constitution  
Child Safeguarding Policy  
Adult Safeguarding Policy  
Codes of Conduct  
Club Grievance and Disciplinary Policy  
Club Inclusion Policy  
Club Online Safety and Social Media Policy

## **Useful contacts**

Helen Gascoyne (Lead Welfare Officer)  
Emma Penson (Welfare Officer)  
UKA 07920 532552/ [safeguarding@uka.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@uka.org.uk)  
[EA\\_welfare@englandathletics.org](mailto:EA_welfare@englandathletics.org)  
NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000  
Childline 0800 1111 / [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
Kidscape [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
Anti-Bullying Alliance [www.antibullyingalliance.org](http://www.antibullyingalliance.org)

Boston and District Athletic Clubs aims to promote the health, safety and welfare of all persons to whom we owe a duty of care, including athletes, volunteers, coaches, parents, spectators and visitors through a commitment to the development of a positive health and safety culture.

To achieve the highest possible standards, Boston and District Athletic Club aims to, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- comply with all relevant health and safety legislation and guidelines;
- conduct risk assessments, ensuring actions arising are implemented and the risks are reduced to the lowest practicable level;
- provide defined procedures, which include safe methods of working for all those involved in the delivery of club activity;
- provide, maintain and inspect plant, equipment and machinery and ensure safe storage/use of substances;
- seek to prevent accidents, incidents, near misses and cases of work-related ill health;
- report any accidents, incidents, near misses and cases of work-related ill health arising from club activity and ensure the timely completion of investigations to prevent incident reoccurrence;
- implement emergency and first aid procedures;
- ensure mechanisms are in place to report hazards and identify and rectify faults;
- ensure suitable welfare arrangements are in place and provide a safe and healthy working environment for all those involved in club activity, and;
- provide appropriate information, instruction and supervision to ensure all those involved in club activity take care of their own safety and welfare and that of others.

Boston and District Athletic Club is committed to the development of individuals involved in the delivery of club activity and aims to:

- establish an effective process that identifies how the health and safety responsibilities are allocated and communicated across the Club;
- communicate matters affecting health and safety, including day-to-day health and safety conditions, and;
- provide appropriate information and support to ensure all those with a responsibility for health and safety are competent in their role.

The Club Committee is responsible for the implementation and management of the health and safety arrangements that exist within Boston and District Athletic Club and accepts this responsibility. The Committee will review this policy statement at least annually and any revisions will be made accessible to members.