



# SCRABO STRIDERS

## ANTI HARRASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY

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. Harassment or bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club. If harassment or bullying does occur, all 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.

Constructive and fair criticism of behaviour or performance is not harassment or bullying. However unresolved conflict, harassment or bullying can have a detrimental effect on personal wellbeing. Therefore, we want to create the sort of club that people want to be a part of and feel proud to be a part of by fostering a climate of dignity and respect amongst all members.

### **What is Harassment?**

Harassment is unwanted behaviour which you find offensive or which make you feel intimidated or humiliated. Harassment can be a single serious incident or an ongoing campaign. Harassment can include but not exclusive to the following:-

- Physical conduct ranging from touching to assault or making obscene gestures;
- Verbal and written harassment through jokes, racist, sexist, sectarian, homophobic or transphobic comments, comments about a person's disability, offensive language, gossip and slander, sectarian songs, mobile ring tones, threats, use of social media, letters and emails;
- Visual displays of posters, screensavers, downloaded images, graffiti, flags, bunting or emblems or any other offensive material;
- Isolating a person, including exclusion from social events;
- Intrusion by pestering, spying or following.

### **What Is Bullying?**

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying can be but not exclusive to the following:-

- 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



### **Why is it Important to Respond to Harassment or Bullying?**

Harassment and bullying are hurtful. No one deserves to be a victim of harassment or bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Athletes who are harassing or bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. This club has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of harassment or bullying.

### **Objectives of this Policy**

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

### **Signs and Symptoms that a child maybe being harassed or bullied**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being harassed or bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Says he is being harassed or 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 athletics equipment damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

### **In more extreme cases**

- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is harassing or bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

These signs and behaviours may indicate other problems, but harassment or bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated



### **Procedures**

1. Report harassment or bullying incidents to the club welfare officer or a member of the committee.
2. In cases of serious harassment or bullying, the incidents will be referred to UK:A for advice
3. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
4. The harassment or bullying behaviour or threats of harassment or bullying must be investigated and the behaviour stopped quickly
5. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour
6. If mediation fails and the harassment or 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.**

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails/not appropriate a small panel (Made up from chairman, Welfare Officer, Secretary, committee members) should meet with the member alleging harassment or 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 3 persons should meet with the alleged member who has instigated bullying 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 harassment or bullying has in their view taken place the athletes should be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the harassment or bullying continues. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
5. All coaches involved with both athletes should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

### **In the case of adults reported to be harassing or bullying athletes under 18**

1. UK:A should always be informed and will advise on action to be taken
2. It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a coach, child protection awareness training may be recommended.
3. More serious cases may be referred to the police, social services or judicial complaints procedure.

### **Prevention:**

- The club will have a written constitution, which includes what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members of which the anti harassment/bullying policy is one part.
- All athletes and parents will sign to accept the constitution upon joining the club.
- The club welfare officer will raise awareness about bullying and why it matters, and if issues of harassment or bullying arise in the club, will consider meeting with members to discuss the issue openly and constructively

**Notwithstanding the legal implications of engaging in such behaviour, bullying and harassment are contrary to the standards of conduct that we expect from our members.**