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Anti-Bullying Policy

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can participate in football in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Tummery Athletic Football Club. If bullying does occur, all club members or parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to report it to their coach, the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer, or any committee member. This club is committed to playing its part in teaching players to treat each other with respect.

**What is Bullying?**

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum defines bullying as *“the repeated use of power, by one or more persons, intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights or needs of another or others”.*

**Bullying can be:**

• Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages/messages into group chats, tormenting, (e.g. hiding football boots/shin guards, threatening gestures)

• Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any unwanted physical contact

• Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

• Discrimination: comments/jokes about people with disabilities, actual or perceived sexuality, racial taunts/gestures

• Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, taunts, racist/homophobic taunts/gestures

• Cyberbullying – using online spaces/social media platforms to spread rumours about someone or exclude them. It can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging.

**Signs and Indicators**

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

• says he or she is being bullied

• is unwilling to go to training sessions/matches

• becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence

• feels ill before training sessions

• comes home with clothes torn or training equipment damaged

• has possessions go “missing”

• 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 bullying other children or siblings

• stops eating

• attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.

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

1. If an incident occurs, players should be informed that bullying will not be tolerated. If a member continues to be discriminatory or display bullying behaviour, their parents should be informed just as in any breach of the Club’s Code of Conduct and this Anti-Bullying policy.
2. If a player makes persistent remarks, they should be removed from the training setting in line with managing challenging behaviour and the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Club Chairperson should talk to them in more detail about why their behaviour is unacceptable.
3. If the problem persists, the player should be made to understand the sanctions that will apply if they continue to display bullying behaviour.
4. Consider inviting the parents/carers to the club to discuss the attitudes of the player in line with the procedures detailed in this policy.

**PROCEDURES**

1. If bullying is reported, the adult should use the Bullying Incident report form to record the details of the incident
2. This should be given to Grainne Goodman (Designated Child Safeguarding Officer) or any member of the Club Committee
3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem.
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.

You may also wish to access any of the following websites designed to give advice and guidance to parents and children who are faced with dealing with bullying:

Guidance for parents/carers

<http://www.niabf.org.uk/>

[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/)

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

Guidance for young people

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

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**TAFC Whistleblowing Policy**

Blowing the whistle on practice or behaviour which compromises the safety and welfare of children and young people can be daunting. Coaches and volunteers who whistle-blow about concerning practice or behaviour should be reassured that they will be believed and supported. Coaches/volunteers, where appropriate, can refer their concerns to any member of the Club Committee.

Players should be encouraged to disclose to a trusted adult. Parents and guardians should be informed that they can voice their concerns, where appropriate, to the head coach. Concerns relating to serious poor practice and abuse must be referred to the Club Safeguarding Team.

**Why Whistleblow?**

• Everyone involved in our Club has a duty to protect the welfare of children and young people – this includes disclosing any harmful or potentially harmful practice.

• Some children and young people are more vulnerable than others, and therefore may rely on a trusted adult to voice their concerns.

• Early intervention will prevent the child or young person from being subjected to further harm or misconduct.

• Whistle-blowing can protect other children and young people in the same environment.

• You have a moral obligation (and a legal obligation if a criminal offence has occurred) to voice any concerns to the proper authorities.

**Barriers To Whistleblowing**

• Fear of getting it wrong

• Lack of knowledge as to how to report concerns and to whom

• Fear of not being believed and supported

• Attitude of “it’s not my responsibility”