Swanage Tennis Club

Anti Bullying Policy

**Statement of Intent**

We don’t put up with bullying in our club. You should tell someone if you see bullying.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our members so they can play tennis in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all

players 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 and Inclusion officer or a member of the committee. (Helen Knight & Alison Phin are currently undertaking the role of Welfare and Inclusion officer for the club).

**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 carried out by anyone, children or adults.

**Bullying can have lots of different forms:**

* Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding racquets/other equipment, 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 focusing on the issue of sexuality
* Verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

**Here are some examples of what we call ‘bullying’:**

* Someone calling you names
* Being threatened
* Being pressured to give someone your money or your things
* Being hit or pushed
* Having your possessions damaged or broken
* Someone spreading rumours about you or about your family
* Someone posting hurtful comments or pictures on the web (such as on Facebook)

**Why do we care about bullying?**

Bullying is a serious problem. You have the right to stop it.

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Players who are bullying need to learn a different way of behaving.

A club has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

**Objectives of this Anti Bullying Policy**

* To make sure that the club finds out about bullying and deals with it as well as possible.
* All committee members, coaches, volunteers, players and parents should know what bullying is.
* All committee members, coaches and volunteers must know and understand this policy and should follow it when bullying is reported.
* All players and parents should know about this policy, and should understand what to do if bullying arises.
* As a club we take bullying seriously. Players and parents should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported.
* Bullying will not be tolerated.

**How to spot if someone is being bullied?**

A child might show that he or she is being bullied in lots of ways. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:

* Says he or she is being bullied
* Is unwilling to go to club sessions
* Becomes withdrawn anxious or lacking in confidence
* Feels ill before training sessions
* Comes home with torn/damaged clothes or damaged equipment
* 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 unlikely explanations for any of the above

**In more extreme cases**

 Starts stammering

 Cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares

 Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable

 Bullies other children or siblings

 Stops eating

 Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

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

**Procedures**

1. Report bullying incidents to the club Welfare and Inclusion officer, a member of the club committee or ring the LTA Safeguarding Team (contact details on website).

2. In cases of serious bullying, the club should contact the LTA for advice

3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem

4. If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted

5. The bullying behaviour and threats of bullying will be investigated and bullying will be stopped as quickly as possible.

6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour and disciplinary action will also be considered where there have been serious acts of misconduct.

7. The club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution if the bully does not change his or her behaviour.

**How we will work with the bully and the victim.**

If we decide (if necessary after receiving advice from the LTA) that it is appropriate for us to deal with the situation, we will follow the procedure outlined below.

1. Where the victim is comfortable to do so and the bullying has not become very serious, reconciliation will be attempted by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.

2. If this fails/ or is not appropriate, a small panel (Made up from Chairman, Welfare and Inclusion officer, Secretary, Committee members) will meet with the parent and child alleging bullying to get details of the allegation.

Notes/minutes will be taken for clarity, and these should be agreed by all as a true account of the matter being investigated.