



38 Magdalen Road, London SW18 3NP

Safe and Inclusive Tennis

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What is Bullying?

Bullying is hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a long period of time, which causes pain and distress to the victim.

Children and young people have repeatedly told the NSPCC/Childline that bullying is their number one concern. Therefore tennis venues, just like any other organisation working with young people in a paid or voluntary capacity, need to address the issue of bullying directly.

Everybody who plays tennis has the right to an enjoyable, safe and inclusive experience.

Types of bullying can include:

Physical	Hitting, pushing, punching or any use of violence
Emotional	Name calling, being unfriendly, sarcasm, teasing, spreading rumours, excluding, ignoring, isolating, threatening or intimidating someone
Sexual	Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments/messages
Discriminatory	Making comments, jokes or threats about someone's race, gender identity, sexual orientation, gender, disability, ability, religion, nationality, age or other personal circumstances or difference
Cyber	Using social media and mobile phones to do any of the above.

Some examples of Bullying could include:

- suggesting that girls or women are inferior to boys and men, e.g. "you serve like a proper girl"
- suggesting that black, Asian and ethnic minority people are not as capable as white people
- spreading rumours that someone is gay
- suggesting that something or someone is inferior by using the term gay, e.g. "you're such a gay" or "that racquet looks gay"
- ridiculing or laughing at someone because of a disability or mental health related issue
- referring to someone by the colour of their skin, rather than their name
- using nicknames that have racial connotations or mimicking someone's accent
- isolating someone because they come from another country or social background etc.
- using websites, social media or text messages to spread rumours about someone or exclude them
- hiding someone's equipment
- deliberately trying to hit someone with a tennis ball or try and trip them up

How to spot Bullying

The following signs may indicate that Bullying is happening in a tennis venue if a child or young person:

- has their possessions go missing/damaged
- is unwilling to go to the tennis venue
- feels ill before coaching sessions or camps
- becomes withdrawn, nervous or lacking in confidence
- shows a change in performance
- asks or steals money (to pay the bully)
- self-harms or attempts/threatens suicide
- is afraid of travelling to the tennis venue alone
- stops eating or sleeping
- begins to bully others
- refuses to say what's wrong, or gives improbable reasons for their behaviour
- is physically injured
- has nightmares
- runs away from home
- change in personality / appearance

Who is involved when Bullying is happening?

1. The Bullied
2. The Bullies
3. The Watchers/Bystanders
4. The Don't Care Team

The Bullied

Bullying can happen to an adult or child and the person being bullied may feel scared and upset, they may feel worried because they don't know why it's happening to them. They may begin to believe that the bullying is their fault or that they deserve it in some way. The person may be made to feel different and isolated causing them to resent being involved in the activity or venue.

The person being bullied needs reassurance that they have done nothing wrong and the fault is definitely not theirs.

It can be difficult for anyone to talk about their problems and it's no different for a child or young person being bullied. It is important that as a responsible adult you understand the young person may be feeling confused or frightened, and many victims of bullying have been threatened about the consequences of telling anyone about what has happened to them.

If the person being bullied has demonstrated the courage to talk to someone, they should be reassured that they will be listened to and their concerns addressed in a sensitive manner that does not further victimise them.

The Bullies

There are a variety of reasons why someone uses bullying behaviour, it may be because they:

- like the feeling of power that bullying someone else can bring;
- expect everyone around them to do as they say;
- do not fit in with other young people even though they may think they do;
- want others to think they are in control;
- enjoy making other young people unhappy;
- have low self esteem and bullying makes them feel stronger and better about themselves
- have experienced being bullied themselves;
- to mask their own insecurities i.e. some young gay people who are struggling with their sexuality, or who others accuse as being gay, may homophobically bully other young people in order to deflect attention and counter any accusations
- feel it is one of the few things they are any good at; or
- feel insecure in their environment.

Whatever the reasons, there is no excuse for bullying and this may be hard for the bully to understand or accept. The bully may never acknowledge their behaviour is wrong, especially since others around them may appear to justify their behaviour.

Coaches may be perceived as bullying young members by picking on one young person and letting others get away with things. They may also tease young people about something that appears insignificant to the adult but can be perceived as embarrassing for the young person.

The Bystander

The child, young person or adult who looks on whilst someone is being bullied may believe they are causing no harm as they are not actively hitting someone or calling them names. Bystanders may offer help after the incident but rarely have the confidence to intervene while the bullying is happening. This reluctance to try to help is understandable in some cases as the bystander may be fearful of also being subject to bullying.

In research carried out by OFSTED called Children on Bullying (2008) 26% of young people stated they would stay and watch someone getting bullied, but say nothing. More worryingly 40% stated they would stay for the fun and excitement.

The 'Don't Care' Team

These are members who do all the other activities like everyone else in the venue and will support the venue in events and competitions. They are fully aware that bullying is happening in the venue, however they believe that as it does not affect them directly they do not need to be concerned or think about it. Although they may know that some fellow members are having a hard time because of bullying, if it not happening to them or their close friends, they will try to ignore it as much as possible.

How can tennis venues prevent Bullying?

Tennis venues are ideal places for promoting good behaviour and a positive ethos of support for members. Demonstrating good behaviour through role modelling provides children and young people with a safe environment for learning.

Coaches, volunteers and other people involved in a tennis venue are well placed to identify when someone may be experiencing or is at risk of being bullied. They may also be the adult that the young person trusts to tell and take action to help protect them.

Coaches/leaders/volunteers should:

- Respect every child's right to a play in an environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Promote an inclusive environment where difference and diversity is valued
- Help children, young people and adults at risk recognise what they have in common with each other
- Respect every individual's feelings and views.
- Ensure safety by having rules and practices that are carefully explained and displayed for all to see.

Young people should:

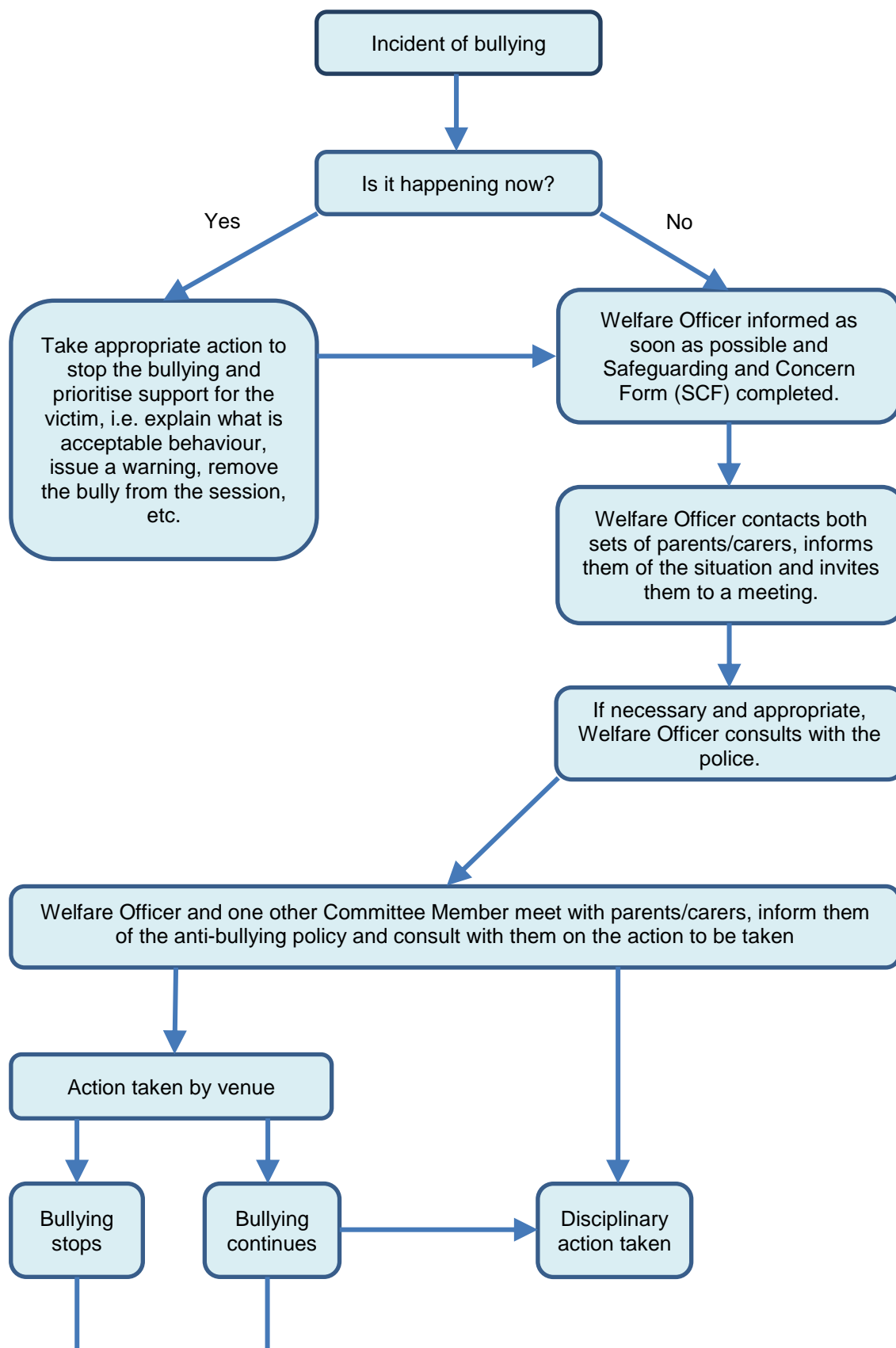
- Recognise that everyone is important and that everyone is different.
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.

This checklist will help venues ensure they are putting measures in place to help promote a positive ethos and prevent Bullying.

	In place	Not in place
Parents/carers are given information and opportunities for discussion and encouraged them to be involved.		
Young people have helped create and signed up to a behaviour agreement/code of conduct as part of their membership.		
Parents /carers are informed that positive behaviour of members is expected at all times.		
A clear anti-bullying commitment explicitly covering all protected characteristics is available for members through the use of: policy,		

posters, training, information leaflets/cards, newsletters, notice boards, web site etc.		
A fair and consistent process exists for dealing with all bullying incidents.		
Coaches recognize the standards expected of them in relation to bullying and have signed a code of conduct/behaviour agreement.		
All members know who the Welfare Officer is and how they can be contacted		
Club has policies on social media, equality and safeguarding		

Procedure for responding to bullying



On-going support, including information on external agencies and helplines, should be offered to the victim, bully and their parents throughout the process.

What action can tennis venues take when Bullying has happened?

The following suggestions will help tennis venues be proactive in responding to Bullying:

1. Always ensure support is provided for the victim and that a safe environment is available where they can talk to someone they trust about what has happened.
2. Talk to the bully about the situation – give them an opportunity to explain what happened.
3. Mediation meeting between the two parties. It may be that an apology and handshake solves the problem.
4. Promote resilience in all of the children involved in the bullying incident (see the Building Resilience Guidance available from www.lta.org.uk/welfareofficers).
5. Organise anti-bullying activities to help the bully understand the impact of their actions. Activities can be downloaded from www.lta.org.uk/welfareofficers.
6. The Welfare Officer, Chairman and one other committee member meet with the victim and their parents/carers to get details of the incident. The same three people meet with the bully and their parents/carers, put the incident to them and ask for their views. Minutes should always be taken at each meeting. A decision on further action is then taken by the venue.
7. Ask the parents of the bully to attend training sessions to ensure bullying is not repeated. The venue committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure bullying does not continue.
8. Inform any coaches involved with the victim and bully of the situation and any sanctions issued to the bully i.e. a warning.
9. Use older teenage members as voluntary listeners for younger members and to act as a buddy system.

Support for the Parents/Guardians/Carers

Parents/Guardians/Carers should be advised on the tennis venue's policy and procedures about bullying, if they are not already aware.

- Any incident of bullying should be discussed with the parents/guardians/carers of those children involved.
- Parents/guardian/carers should be consulted on making an appropriate response and verbal/written agreements made as to what action should be taken.
- Parents/guardians/carers should be signposted to information and advice on managing / coping with bullying.

Additional support

Venues, parents/carers and children and young people can access support, guidance and resources from:

Venue completes and retains SCF for their records

- www.stoptextbully.com

- www.beatbullying.org.uk
- www.stonewall.org.uk
- www.bullying.co.uk
- www.youngstonewall.org.uk/
- www.cybermentors.org.uk
- www.childline.org.uk
- www.kidscape.org.uk

The LTA Safeguarding Team can also provide advice and support

T: 0208 487 7000

E: safeguarding@lta.org.uk

W: www.lta.org.uk/safeguarding

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