



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Statement of intent

Benson Striders 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. If necessary and appropriate, the police may be consulted.
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.



Recommended club action

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

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
- Adult Safeguarding Policy
- Codes of Conduct
- Club Grievance and Disciplinary Policy (included in Club Constitution section 29)
- Club Inclusion Policy
- Club Social Media Policy

Useful contact

- Club Welfare Officer
- UKA 07920 532552/ safeguarding@uka.org.uk
- EA welfare@englandathletics.org
- Anti-Bullying Alliance www.antibullyingalliance.org