

Stockport County Football Education

Anti-Bullying Policy



Football Education

Originator: Lucy Connell (Head of Education)
 Date of Last Approval: August 2023
 Review Interval: Annual
 Date of next Review: August 2024
 Approved by: Sarah Donohoe (TCG)



1 Statement of Intent

Stockport County Football Education is committed to providing a caring, friendly, supportive and safe environment for everyone so they can participate in all activities confidently and in a safe atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is not tolerated at our club/academy/education programme. If bullying does occur, all students or parents/carers should be able to inform a member of staff and have full confidence that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are part of a TELLING club, which means anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a suitable member of staff.

2 What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour that is repeated and intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally, or both. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can take various forms and can be:

- (a) **Emotional** being unfriendly, excluding or tormenting.
- (b) **Physical** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- (c) **Racist** racial taunts, gestures or graffiti.
- (d) **Sexual** unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- (e) **Homophobic** because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality.
- (f) **Verbal** name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours or teasing.
- (g) **Cyber** All areas of internet use, including email, text messaging, phone calls, all social media platforms.

3 Why is it important to respond to bullying?

No one deserves to be the victim of bullying; everyone deserves to be treated fairly and with respect. Individuals who are bullying need to understand the hurt they are causing, acknowledge that there are consequences to their actions and be educated appropriately in order to change their behaviour.

Stockport County Football Education has a responsibility to respond and act promptly to issues of bullying. The purpose of this policy is to:

- (a) Ensure all Stockport County Football Education students, staff, officials, volunteers and parents/carers have an understanding of what bullying is and are able to recognise the signs and indicators of bullying.
- (b) Ensure all Stockport County Football Education staff, officials and volunteers know what the organisation's policy and procedures on bullying are and follow them when any cases of bullying are reported or brought to their attention.
- (c) Ensure all students and their parents/carers know what the Stockport County Football Education policy on bullying is and what they should do if bullying arises.
- (d) Ensure that bullying is taken very seriously at Stockport County Football Education and to assure students and their parents/carers that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Bullying in any form will not be tolerated.

4 Signs and Symptoms

A young person may indicate verbally, or by signs or changes (sometimes subtle) in behaviour, that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs, and they should investigate if a young person:

- (a) Says he or she is being bullied.
- (b) Is unwilling to attend certain sessions or activities.
- (c) Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- (d) Feels ill before study or training sessions.
- (e) Comes home with clothing or training equipment damaged.
- (f) Has possessions "go missing."
- (g) Asks for money uncharacteristically or starts stealing money.
- (h) Has unexplained injuries, cuts or bruises.
- (i) Is frightened to say what is wrong.
- (j) Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

In more extreme cases:

- (k) Starts stammering.
- (l) Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- (m) Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- (n) Starts bullying other young people or siblings.
- (o) Stops eating.
- (p) Attempts or threatens self-harm or suicide.
- (q) Attempts or threatens to run away.

Any of these signs or behaviours may indicate other issues, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

5 Procedures for dealing with bullying

- (a) Take all signs and cases of bullying very seriously.
- (b) Encourage all young people to talk and share their concerns.
- (c) If a young person tells you they are being bullied: reassure them that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise not to tell anyone and will seek help and support by the relevant staff at Stockport County Football Education.
- (d) Keep records of what is said and let the young person use their own words (what happened, by whom, when, where); be sure not to fill in any blanks for them.
- (e) Report bullying incidents to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): Head of Education, Lucy Connell, or Attendance & Welfare Officer, Kelly Aston.

6 Action Taken

Stockport County Football Education staff will acknowledge and respond to any cases of bullying promptly:

- (a) The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly. Parents/carers will be informed and involved in meetings and processes to stop the bullying and help the perpetrator(s) to change their behaviour.
- (b) In some cases, if deemed appropriate by Stockport County Football Education staff, attempts of reconciliation will be made by getting parties together. It may be that a genuine apology and acknowledgement helps solve the problem.
- (c) If mediation fails and the perpetrator continues any bullying behaviour, Stockport County Football Education staff will initiate an investigation and potential disciplinary action.
- (d) In consultation with parents/carers, Stockport County Football Education staff will monitor the situation for a given period of time to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
- (e) All tutors, coaches and support staff associated with the individuals involved should be made aware of the issues and outcomes of the process.
- (f) In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be investigated and recorded fully and communicated with the Designated Safeguarding Leads at Stockport College to agree appropriate action; this may include consulting with the Police.

In the case of adults reported to be bullying a young person:

- (g) The DSO must be informed immediately who will advise on action to be taken where appropriate; this may include initiating an investigation and possible disciplinary action in line with the organisation's disciplinary procedures.

Useful Websites:

www.childline.org.uk

www.bullying.co.uk

www.kidsin crisis.org.uk