



# VERULAMIANS RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY 2023-24

It is a term of membership of Verulamians RFC (the “Club”) that all members (and any child that they may have who plays in one of the Club’s youth sections) abide by the terms of the Club’s Anti-Bullying Policy.

Allegations of a breach of the Club’s Anti-Bullying Policy will be investigated by the Club’s Disciplinary Committee. If any Club member (and any child that they may have who plays in one of the Club’s youth sections) does not comply with the Club’s Anti-Bullying Policy sanctions will be applied to that individual by the Club’s disciplinary committee.

The ultimate sanction will be withdrawal or refusal of Club membership.

All youth rugby coaches and other youth rugby volunteers involved at the Club are required to familiarize themselves with the Club’s Anti-Bullying Policy, support it and abide by it.

The Club’s Anti-Bullying Policy (together with any other codes or policies introduced from time to time relating to its youth players) will be posted on the Club’s website.

The Policy may be amended from time to time by the Club.

It is the policy of the Club to protect children and young people under the age of 18 playing youth rugby from possible bullying.

The Club takes the problem of bullying seriously.

Bullying is not always easy to define, can take many forms and is usually repeated over a period of time. Bullying is not limited to an adult bullying a young person; it is often the case that the bully is a young person.

There are three main types of bullying:

- Ø Physical (eg hitting, kicking, theft)
- Ø Verbal (eg racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling)
- Ø Emotional (eg persistent negative feedback, isolating an individual from activities).

All of these will include:

- Ø Deliberate hostility and aggression towards a victim
- Ø A victim who is weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies
- Ø An outcome which is always painful and distressing to the victim.

Bullying behaviour may also include:

- Ø Other forms of violence
- Ø Sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing or theft
- Ø Tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation
- Ø Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Ø Unwanted physical contact or abusive or offensive comments of a sexual nature.

# THE CLUB'S ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The competitive nature of rugby union makes it a potential environment for the bully. This may manifest it self in some of the following ways:

- Ø A parent who pushes too hard
- Ø A coach who adopts a “win at all costs” philosophy
- Ø A player who intimidates others
- Ø An official who is over officious.

In the first instance, incidents of bullying should be reported to the Club via its Safeguarding Officer:

PAUL MCGOOHAN- CLUBSEC.VEES@GMAIL.COM

Club members must be alert to the signs of bullying and refer cases promptly. Failure to respond to incidents may be interpreted as condoning the behaviour – the Club wishes to avoid giving this impression to bullies and victims alike.

In the event of an incident of bullying being reported to the Club, the Club’s disciplinary committee will:

- Ø Investigate the incident
- Ø Talk separately to the those accused of bullying and their alleged victims

On completion of the investigation the Club’s disciplinary committee will decide on appropriate action, such as (but not limited to):

- Ø Obtaining an apology from the bully(ies) to the victim(s)
- Ø Informing the parents of the bully(ies)
- Ø Insisting on the return of items “borrowed” or stolen
- Ø Insisting the bully(ies) compensate the victim(s)
- Ø Holding Club or age group discussions about bullying
- Ø Provide support for the lead coach of the victim(s)