

Policy for Anti-Bullying at Aquinas Football Club.

The policy for anti-bullying will be promoted in the following ways:

The Club will:

Create an environment in which the whole Club Community is valued, happy and safe.

Ensure that the Code of Practice and Code of Conduct is followed by everyone.

Acknowledge that bullying can and does take place, that it is unacceptable and can be prevented.

Have in place agreed procedures for responding to incidents.

Provide training and support for staff.

Develop and maintain good relationships with parents.

Put in place preventative measures that can reduce the risk of bullying occurring.

Seek advice and help from other professionals if appropriate.

The Manager/Coach will:

Provide a safe, happy and caring environment.

Value all club members and be sensitive to their needs.

Listen to members; recognise and address their concerns and take a serious view of reported bullying.

Be aware of bullying and strategies to avoid it.

Participate in anti-bullying training.

Promote and celebrate member's positive behaviour.

Put in place agreed procedures for responding to bullying.

Develop good relationships with parents.

Work with professionals who support victims of bullying.

The member will:

Treat others with respect and dignity.

Be sensitive to the needs of others.

Listen to others.

Behave appropriately.

Abide by team and club rules.

Tell if others are being bullied.

Comply with strategies put in place to avoid or address bullying situations.

The parents will be asked to:

Treat all members and coaching staff with dignity and respect.

Encourage their child to behave appropriately.

Report any concerns about their child to the club.

Report incidents of perceived bullying or other inappropriate behaviour concerning another member to the club.

Support the club in relation to their own child whether victim or bully by attending arranged meetings and by complying with agreed strategies to address the issue.

Develop a good relationship with the club.

Bullying

In Aquinas Football Club we recognise that in spite of a positive and caring ethos with great emphasis placed on the promotion of positive behaviour, there will occasionally be incidents of bullying.

We acknowledge that bullying can have long lasting and detrimental effects upon the victim. We know that it can damage the self-esteem and cause pain and suffering. It can cause great unhappiness for a child and interfere with their development both within the club and in the wider environment of school and home life.

We also recognise that children may have difficulty in recognising and communicating that they are being bullied.

We know that children are very vulnerable to any kind of abuse, including bullying. In this respect we will strive to provide members with the skills and knowledge they require to protect themselves.

We are committed to helping both the victim and the bully.

We take bullying very seriously.

We will deal with bullying in a consistent manner as quickly and effectively as possible.

All managers, coaches and officials are expected to be alert to the dangers of bullying and to report any concerns to the Secretary.

What is bullying?

Bullying is any form of aggressive behaviour deliberately intended to cause hurt or harm to another individual.

It can take many forms:

Physical – hitting, kicking, hair pulling, pushing, slapping etc; damaging or stealing personal belongings.

Verbal – name-calling, teasing, mocking appearances or disability of another player, threatening or making false accusations.

Social – exclusion from play, games, conversation.

Cyber-bullying – Cyber bullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites

We are determined to ensure that every member in Aquinas will have the opportunity to play football in a safe, happy and caring environment where they can be free from fear of being bullied by other members or any adult.

However when dealing with a problem we are always mindful of the individual and will put in place appropriate strategies to meet individual needs. In every situation we will seek advice from our Child Protection/Safeguarding Officer depending on the gravity or sensitivity of the situation and on the advice provided by the CPO/SO, we may seek advice or support from other professionals such as Behaviour Nurse Therapist or Clinical Psychologist.

In Aquinas FC we use a range of strategies and activities to counteract bullying:

Team Training

Team and Club Rules

Promotion of Positive Behaviour

No Blame Approach

All reports of bullying investigated.

Involvement of parents (victim and bully)

Training for Managers, Coaches and Officials in Child Protection.

In extreme circumstances, depending on the severity of the incident, the Club might suspend a member, referring at all times to the guidance given in our Child Protection Policies and in line with the Club's authority as per the Constitution.

For a very small number of members such action may be necessary.