



On Target Soccer: Anti-Bullying Policy

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our members, so they can participate in football in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at On Target Soccer. If bullying does occur, all club members and parents/carers should be able to tell their club about this and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively by the club.

We are a TELLING club. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Club Welfare Officer or any committee member. On Target Soccer is committed to playing its part to teach players to treat each other with respect.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace, and comes in many different forms:

Verbal: Name calling, persistent teasing, mocking, taunting and threats.

Physical: Any form of physical violence, intimidating behaviour, theft or the intentional damage of possessions. This includes hitting, kicking and pushing.

Emotional: Excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, setting people up and spreading rumours.

Cyberbullying: The misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or a group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation. Examples of cyberbullying include:

- Abusive comments, rumours, gossip and threats made using digital communications and/ or technologies - this includes internet trolling.
- Sharing pictures, videos or personal information without the consent of the owner and with the intent to cause harm or humiliation.
- Hacking into someone's email, phone or online profiles to extract and share personal information, or to send hurtful content while posing as that person.
- Creating dedicated websites that intend to harm, make fun of someone or spread malicious rumours.
- Pressurising someone to do something they do not want to such as sending a sexually explicit image.

Any online bullying will be dealt with swiftly and appropriately in line with procedures detailed in this policy.

People can be targeted for any reason, but people who bully others often target 'difference' and bullying can be a form of wider discrimination. For example, bullying behaviour may be:

- Racist: Targeted at ethnicity, skin colour, and language, religious or cultural practices.
- Homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic: Targeted at actual or perceived sexuality and/or gender.
- Sexual and/or sexist: Sexual and/or sexist behaviour that is intended to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation.
- Disablist: Targeted at an impairment or special educational need.
- Targeting any 'difference': Bullying behaviour can also be targeted at 'looks', weight and height, colour of hair, wearing glasses or braces, acne, psoriasis and eczema, scars, marks or conditions of the face or body, body odour, poverty, gifts and talents or family situation (e.g. divorce, bereavement, homelessness).

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and no one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Individuals who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. On Target Soccer recognises its responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

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 the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer for advice and possibly to The FA Case Management Team.
3. Parents/carers should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
7. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will initiate disciplinary action.

PREVENTION

- The club has a written code of conduct, 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 automatically accept the 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.