



## ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Lakewood Tennis Club anti-bullying policy sets out how we feel about bullying as a club, what we will do to tackle it and how we will support children and young people who experience or display bullying behaviour.

### 1. Bullying

Bullying is defined by the Department of Education and Skills guidelines as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

- All forms of bullying will be acted upon.
- Everybody in the club has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying.
- Bullying can include online as well as offline behaviour.

Bullying can include:

- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc...
- Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation or the continual ignoring of individuals.
- Posting of derogatory or abusive comments, videos or images on social network sites.
- Racial, homophobic, transphobic taunts or sexist comments, graffiti, gestures, sectarianism
- Sexual comments, suggestions or behaviour and unwanted physical contact.

### 2. Lakewood Tennis Club will:

- Recognise its duty of care and responsibility to safeguard all players from harm.
- Promote and implement this anti-bullying policy in addition to our safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Seek to ensure that bullying behaviour is not tolerated or condoned.
- Require all members of the club and parents of junior members to sign up to this policy.
- Take action to investigate and respond to any alleged incidents of bullying.
- Encourage and facilitate children and young people to play an active part in developing and adopting a code of conduct to address bullying.
- Ensure that coaches are given access to information, guidance and/or training on bullying.

Each member, player, parent, coach, volunteer or committee official will:

- Encourage individuals to speak out about bullying behaviour
- Respect every child's need for, and rights to, a play environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect the feelings and views of others.
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special and should be valued.
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.
- Be committed to the early identification of bullying, and prompt and collective action to deal with it.
- Ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained and displayed for all

to see.

- Report incidents of bullying they see to the club children's officer – by doing nothing you are condoning bullying.

#### Support to the parents/guardians:

- Parents/guardians should be advised on the club's bullying policy and practice.
- Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the child's parent(s)/carers.
- Parents will be consulted on action to be taken (for both victim and bully) and agreements made as to what action should be taken.
- Information and advice on coping with bullying will be made available.
- Support should be offered to the parent(s) including information on other agencies or support lines.

#### Support to the child:

- Children should know who will listen to and support them.
- Systems should be established to open the door ethos where children feel confident to talk to an adult about bullying or any other issue that affects them.
- Potential barriers to talking (including those associated with a child's disability or impairment) need to be acknowledged and addressed at the outset to enable children to approach adults for help and speak out.
- Children should have access to Helpline numbers.
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported.
- Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.
- Children experiencing bullying will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development.
- Those who display bullying behaviour will be supported and encouraged to develop better relationships
- We will make sure that sanctions are proportionate and fair. Sanctions for those bullying others that involves long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, will be avoided.

### 3. Useful Contacts:

Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC):  
[www.ispcc.ie/shield](http://www.ispcc.ie/shield) Anti-Bullying Centre DCU: [www4.dcu.ie/abc/index](http://www4.dcu.ie/abc/index)  
NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000  
Sticks and Stones: 087 9015199 or [www.sticksandstones.ie](http://www.sticksandstones.ie)  
ChildLine UK: 0800 11 11 / [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
ChildLine Republic of Ireland: 1800 66 66 66 or  
Text Talk to 50101, [www.childline.ie](http://www.childline.ie)  
Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum: [www.niabf.org.uk](http://www.niabf.org.uk)  
Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
Anti-Bullying Alliance: [www.antibullyingalliance.org](http://www.antibullyingalliance.org)

## 4. Anti-Bullying Policy and Code

Policy Updated: October 2023

The anti-bullying policy and code sets out guidelines and procedures to clearly establish how to deal with any incidents. While it is important to have rules about bullying, a whole group policy is the best solution. This means not 'bullying the bully' but working with bullies and the group of young people, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing, and so make the problem a 'shared concern' of the group. Group discussion methods have a big advantage over punishment in that they do not drive the problem underground or escalate it by making the bully more excluded or more of a social failure. This is known as the "No blame approach" (see below)

What is the 'No Blame' Approach?

*Step 1 – Interview with the victim*

- If you find that there has been an incident of bullying, first talk to the victim.
- At this stage find out who was involved and what the victim is now feeling. Try asking the following questions:
  - Was it verbal or physical intimidation?
  - How hurt is the victim
  - Was it within his/her own peer group?
- Ensure the victim that his/her name will not come out in the investigation
- Actively listen

*Step 2 – Meet with all involved*

- Arrange to meet with all those involved; this should include some bystanders, those who may have colluded, those joined in and those who initiated the bullying.
- Just have a maximum of six to eight in the group – keep the number controllable
- Make a point of calling a 'special' meeting
- Ensure the severity of the topic is understood by all
- Speak only of the hurt caused in general terms with no reference to the victim
- Play on the conscience of all – ask: How would you feel? Would you like it done to you?

*Step 3 – Explain the problem*

- The distress being suffered as a result of the bullying incident is explained. At this stage the details of the incident or the allocation of the blame is not discussed.
- Explain the feelings of loneliness, feeling left out, rejected, laughed at.
- Try asking questions:
  - Would they like it if it happened to them?
  - "Someone here in this group was bullied by someone within the group, what could we do to see it does not happen again?"
- Listen, watch out for reactions, and pick up on any without isolating anyone

*Step 4 – Share the responsibility*

- Explain what steps / controls may have to be introduced to prevent further incidents and how everyone will lose out as a result

*Step 5 – Ask the group for their ideas*

- At this stage the group is encouraged to suggest ways that would make the victim feel happier. All positive responses are noted. Use phrases "if it were you" to encourage a response. Listen to all suggestions and note them

*Step 6 – Leave it to them*

- Now the problem has been identified, solutions suggested, the problem is now handed over to the group to solve. Arrange to meet again in a week's time. Pass responsibility over to the group and give a time frame within which something must be done

*Step 7 – Meet them again*

- Each member of the group, including the bully, discuss how things are going, who is doing what and have there been other incidents. This allows for continual monitoring and also keeps all involved in the process.
- Again, enforce the idea of the 'team' looking after each other at regular intervals to ensure it is known that bullying or intimidating behaviour will not be tolerated.