



## Manchester Girls F.C.

### Anti-Bullying Policy

#### What is bullying?

There are many definitions of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour
- It is repeated often over a period of time
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

#### Bullying can take many forms, but the main types are:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, racist remarks
- Racist
- Sexual
- Homophobic
- Emotional – tormenting, mobile text messages, ridiculing, humiliating or ignoring
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, excluding someone from social groups

#### Cyber Bullying

This is when a person uses technology i.e. mobile phones or the internet (social networking sites, chat rooms, instant messenger, tweets), to deliberately upset someone. Bullies often feel anonymous and

'distanced' from the incident when it takes place online and 'bystanders' can easily become bullies themselves by forwarding the information on. There is a growing trend for bullying to occur online or via texts – bullies no longer rely on being physically near to the young person.

## **Trolling**

This is the name given to posting deliberately offensive comments on people's social media pages aimed at causing upset and distress. This type of behaviour could result in legal action.

## **Why should our football club be concerned about bullying?**

There are a number of very important reasons for challenging bullying behaviour at football.

- The safety and happiness of players and managers. When players are bullied, whether it be by peers, managers, coaches or other players, their lives are made miserable. They may suffer injury. They may be unhappy about coming to football. Over time they are likely to lose self-confidence and self-esteem. Some may blame themselves for 'inviting' the bullying behaviour.
- Sporting achievement. The unhappiness of bullied players is likely to affect their concentration and learning. Some children will avoid being bullied by not coming to practice.
- Providing a model for helpful behaviour. If they observe bullying behaviour going unchallenged, other players may learn that bullying is a quick and effective way of getting what they want. Those players who are being bullied may interpret the Clubs inaction as condoning unacceptable behaviour. They will feel badly let down by adults in authority.

## **Combating Bullying**

It is important that players are aware that Manchester Girls Football Club, as a whole, will deal swiftly with any instances of bullying. They therefore need to know what types of behaviour constitute BULLYING.

Once they have this awareness the children must seek the support of friends and adults at football or at home. They must communicate their worries and fears to someone who cares and who they can trust.

### **A bully in football can be:**

- A parent who pushes too hard
- A coach/manager who has a “win at all costs” philosophy
- A child or young person intimidating each other
- An official who places unfair pressure on a child or young person

### **Raising Awareness**

Manchester Girls Football Club will talk openly about bullying and recognise that some form of bullying may exist. The children will learn the importance of telling someone else if they feel threatened or bullied. They must be made aware that they can turn to anyone of the following people for help:

- Parents or Carers
- Managers / Coaches
- Child Welfare Officer
- Child Protection Officer

Managers and Coaches will model and focus on appropriate behaviour during training sessions. Children will have the opportunity to discuss issues such as kindness, caring for others and treating others as we wish to be treated ourselves. By emphasising appropriate behaviour, we would hope to diminish the occurrence of bullying at our Football Club.

### **Response to Bullying**

It is important that all aspects of bullying or suspected bullying are dealt with immediately. No adult at our Football Club should dismiss claims of bullying without first investigating their validity. This can be time consuming but is vital because this type of inappropriate behaviour needs to be prevented at the earliest opportunity.

Obviously, there will be instances when the claims are invalid, however all cases must be dealt with quickly and fairly.

### **Procedures**

1. Report bullying incidents to the Club Welfare Officer or a member of the clubs committee
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred The FA Case Management Team
3. Parents 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 under the club constitution.

### **Club Action**

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation, they should follow the procedure outlined below:

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails/not appropriate a small panel (made up from members) should meet with the parent and child alleging bullying to get details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.
3. The same 3 persons should meet with the alleged bully and parent/s and put the incident raised to them to answer and give

their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed.

4. If bullying has in their view taken place the individual should be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the bullying continues. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
5. In some cases, the parent of the bully or bullied player can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
6. All coaches involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

Guidance for parents/carers

[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/)

[www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

Guidance for young people

[www.youngstonewall.org.uk/](http://www.youngstonewall.org.uk/)

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)