

ELTHAM JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY



Policy Statement

Eltham Junior Football Club is committed to providing an environment that is free from bullying and harassment and able to respond appropriately to the complex issue of bullying. Within this context, bullying is completely unacceptable behaviour.

Eltham Junior Football Club is committed to providing a safe and caring environment that accepts difference and is responsive to individuals needs. All club participants are entitled to feel safe and gain maximum advantage from their time at the Eltham Junior Football Club. Bullying is damaging to the self-esteem of the victim and can impede the enjoyment of sport and make it an unpleasant, if not traumatic experience.

The Club will seek to develop protocols to raise awareness of bullying, address incidents of bullying and facilitate a positive and caring environment that does not foster bullying or violence. Coaches, organisers and parents should act as appropriate role models, and be vigilant in identifying and dealing with bullying. Players have a responsibility to be caring, positive and supportive of one another, and to use the administrative resources of the club to resolve relationship difficulties.

Definition

Bullying is when an individual or group uses their power to hurt or intimidate others.

Types of bullying may include:

- Physical- pushing fighting, pinching, misuse or abuse of others' property.
- Verbal/written- put downs, name calling, derisive comments, verbal sexual harassment, written graffiti of offensive nature.
- Gesture- This can range from dirty looks, to making obscene gestures behind peoples backs;
- Extortion- Physically stronger participants bully others into giving up possessions, rights etc;
- Exclusion- Depriving participants of social acceptance by their peers;
- Severe, continuing and unreasonable criticism, beyond normal discipline by those in authority;
- Imposing unreasonable penalties, beyond policies and generally accepted practice when in authority;

Imposition of normal player discipline is not bullying. All participants are involved on a voluntary basis, on the condition they will be cooperative and well-conducted. In addition, football is a team game, requiring adherence to a game plan and reasonable discipline may be applied when players do not work within this framework.

The game structure or strategy should not be interpreted as a form of bullying. A particular player may not receive as many opportunities for possessions of the ball as others because of allocated positions in

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a team or game strategy rather than reflecting players' attitudes toward other players. If there are concerns involving this issue, they may be raised respectfully at, an appropriate time, with the coach.

Seeking to deter bullying.

Between players in the context of the club it is unusual for bullying to take place at games or at training. Regardless, coaches and parents should provide supervision which makes blatant bullying unlikely to occur and be alert to the possibility of bullying, take any complaints seriously, with support and respect for complainants.

On camps, tours and away matches, sustained interaction makes bullying more likely to occur. The coach, organiser or team manager should emphasise before the commencement of such activities that acceptance of differences, support for each other and respect for private and personal space are important. Particularly on camps and tours, it should be made clear, that bullying is not acceptable and will be penalised accordingly.

Dealing with Bullying and Harassment.

There are two phases of dealing with bullying.

1. Identify the problem.
2. Seek to solve the problem.

The Club requests the assistance of parents in discouraging, identifying and, if necessary supervising to prevent bullying, and co-operating in the education and discipline of those involved in any bullying conduct. Where bullying outside or inside the Club has made the selection of players in the same team inappropriate, parents are requested to provide early information to the relevant coach, team manager or a committee member.

When a problem relating to bullying seems beyond mere instruction and feasible and appropriate supervision, it should be referred to a coach or team manager, or alternatively to a committee member to initiate the Grievance Policy of the Club.

Through the Grievance policy of the Club, the Club will seek to deal with any allegations of bullying. If the issue is not resolved, a Club member may invoke the Grievances Processes as in the Model Rules for Incorporated Associations