



# **BASINGSTOKE**

RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **1. Rationale**

At BRFC we aim to create a safe and secure learning environment where individuals treat each other with respect and understanding. Bullying will not be tolerated at all in our Club. Bullying will be taken seriously, responded to promptly, and procedures followed to deal with the situation. It is the responsibility of every adult working in rugby union whether professional or volunteer, to ensure that all young people can enjoy the sport in a safe enjoyable environment.

### **2. Aims**

- To create a positive ethos within the club based on mutual respect and trust
- To recognise what bullying is, and to provide effective measures to address bullying issues

### **3. What is Bullying?**

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying occurs when this behaviour is exercised using power rather than an exchange between equals. This power may be due to greater physical or psychological strength or greater numbers.

#### **Bullying can be:**

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically) and tormenting (e.g. hiding rugby kit, threatening gestures including sending threatening text/social media messages).
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic – because of or focusing on the issue of sexuality.
- Verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Children and young people have described bullying as:

- being called names.
- being teased.
- being hit, pushed, pulled, pinched, or kicked.
- having their bag, mobile or other possessions taken.
- receiving abusive text/social media messages.
- being forced to hand over money.
- being forced to do things they do not want to do.
- being ignored or left out.
- being victimised or attacked because of religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance, ethnic or racial origin.

#### 4. Establishing a Positive Club Ethos

The most important aspect of our strategy to combat bullying is the creation of a positive and inclusive club ethos. This begins with how adults at Basingstoke RFC treat each other, its members, parents, and children: with respect and understanding, even in difficult situations.

Concerns expressed by children and parents are **always listened to carefully and taken seriously**.

At Basingstoke RFC we promote and follow the RFU Core Values, <https://www.englishrugby.com/the-rfu/core-values>

Everyone involved in rugby in England, whether as a player, coach, referee, administrator, parent or spectator is expected to uphold the Core Values of our sport:

#### **Teamwork – Respect – Enjoyment – Discipline – Sportsmanship**

- Play to win – but not at all cost
- Win with dignity, lose with grace
- Observe the Laws and regulations of the game
- Respect opponents, referees and all participants
- Reject cheating, racism, violence and drugs
- Value volunteers and paid officials alike
- Enjoy the game

We aim to be constantly promoting and reinforcing positive behaviour and developing all children's self-esteem through celebration of achievement. In this way, by aiming to 'include' everyone in the Club community, it is much less likely either those children will become a focus for bullying, or that others may resort to bullying.

We encourage children, parents, volunteers and staff to report any suspected instances of bullying to one of the coaching staff or to the Club Safeguarding Officer. Children in particular need to be assured not to keep worries to themselves, but to tell their parent and/or a Coach.

The whole Club Community needs to be assured that all instances are taken very seriously and investigated thoroughly.

It is essential that the first adult involved in the situation reassures the victim and informs the Club Safeguarding Officer.

Parents of all children involved should be informed at the earliest opportunity, so that their support can be encouraged. Parents are encouraged to:

- Listen carefully to their child, and reassure them that action will be taken
- Stay calm whatever the concerns
- Discuss issues with the Club at the earliest opportunity, and review actions regularly
- Give the Club time to address the issues

In the case of a Looked After Child, it is essential that their Social Worker is involved at the earliest opportunity.

## **5. Continuation of Bullying**

In the event that any child involved continues to bully others, then it will be necessary to initiate further action. Further parental involvement would be essential. If all these strategies were tried and failed, then ultimately this can lead to permanent exclusion from the Club.

It is essential that all employees, committee members, coaches, volunteers, parents and children are aware of this policy.

When the policy is revised, it should be discussed with all those involved with children. New coaches & volunteers must be made aware of the policy as part of their induction process. At the start of each club year, the key points of the policy should be discussed.

This policy has been adopted in accordance with the club constitution.

Signed: *LMottram*

Name: Laurence Mottram

Position: Chair of Governance

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026

For further information about Basingstoke RFC Policies and guidance please visit our full document area at <https://www.basingstokerfc.com/information/club-documents>