

## Bullying Policy

### Statement of Intent

Sparta FC are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can participate in football in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all club members or parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected. This club is committed to playing its part to teach players to treat each other with respect.

### 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 can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically) sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding football boots/shin guards, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Discrimination - Racial taunts, Graffiti, Gestures, Homophobic comments, jokes about disabled people, sexist comments,
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing,

### 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.

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## **Our Commitment**

Sparta FC commits to ensure our websites and/ or social networking pages are being used appropriately and any online bullying will be dealt with swiftly and appropriately in line with procedures detailed in this policy.

## **Why is it important to Respond to Bullying?**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Individuals who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. This club has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying

## **Objectives of this Policy**

All club members, coaches, officials and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.

All club members, coaches, and officials should have an understanding of what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.

All players and parents should know what the club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

As a club we take bullying seriously. Players and parents should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported.

Bullying will not be tolerated.

## **Signs and Indicators**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- says he or she is being bullied
- is unwilling to go to club sessions
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- feels ill before training sessions
- comes home with clothes torn or training equipment damaged
- has possessions go “missing”
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises

- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

**In more extreme cases:**

- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.

These signs and behaviours may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

**Bullying as a result of any form of discrimination**

Bullying because of discrimination occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against certain people or groups of people. This may be because of their gender, age, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability or ability. Generally, these forms of bullying look like other sorts of bullying, but in particular it can include:

- Verbal abuse – derogatory remarks about girls or women, suggesting girls and women are inferior to boys and men, or that black, Asian and ethnic minority people are not as capable as white people; spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that something or someone is inferior and so they are “gay” – for example, “you’re such a gay boy!” or “those trainers are so gay!”  
Ridiculing someone because of a disability or mental health related issue, or because they have a physical, mental or emotional developmental delay.  
Referring to someone by the colour of their skin, rather than their name; using nicknames that have racial connotations; isolating someone because they come from another country or social background etc.
- Physical abuse – including hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault, and threatening behaviour.
- Cyberbullying – using online spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them. It can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging.

Guidance for parents/carers

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



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[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)