



Harrogate Pythons Rugby Union Football Club

Anti-bullying Policy

Bullying of any kind is not acceptable within Harrogate Pythons RFC. The club expects anyone who is affiliated with the club to embrace the clubs core values of Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship.

- Harrogate Pythons RFC have a 'telling' culture and anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, a club official or the safeguarding officer.
- Bullying will be taken seriously, responded to promptly, and procedures followed to deal with the situation.
- It is the responsibility of every member of the club to ensure that all members can enjoy the sport in a safe enjoyable environment.
- Any form of bullying will not be tolerated within the club.

Objectives of the policy

- Raise awareness of bullying and its impact with all members, officials and players within the club.
- All club members, coaches and volunteers should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All club members, coaches and volunteers should know what the club, RFU and Constituent Body policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All players should know what the club, RFU and Constituent Body policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.
- Players should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Ensure all players know they can talk to someone if they are worried.
- Ensure all volunteers and officials know they can talk to someone if they are worried.

What is bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it is usually defined as behaviour that includes the use of words, force, threat, coercion or abuse to intimidate, aggressively dominate or single out others.

- The behaviour is often repeated and habitual. All of these will include:
- Deliberate hostility and aggression towards a victim.
- A victim who is weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies.
- An outcome which is always painful and distressing to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), and tormenting (e.g. Hiding rugby kit, threatening gestures including sending threatening text 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 or teasing.
- Cyberbullying - through social media, text messaging or email



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Bullying may manifest itself in some of the following ways:

- A coach who adopts a 'win at all costs' philosophy.
- A player who intimidates others.
- An official who is over officious.
- A spectator who shouts abuse or instructions.

Signs to look out for:

- Being constantly criticised, having duties and responsibility taken away without good reason.
- Shouting, aggressive behaviour or threats.
- Being put down or made to feel like the butt of the jokes.
- Being persistently picked on in front of others or in private.
- Being constantly ignored, victimised and excluded regularly.
- Constantly mocked and attacked in a wrongful or spiteful way for no clear reason.
- Spreading malicious rumours or messages through social media or mobile text.
- Misuse of power or position to make someone feel uncomfortable or victimised.
- Making threats about role security without any basis or substance.
- Blocking promotion or progress within the rugby club.
- Constant subject of poor practice or foul language.
- Physiological pressure or acts of humiliation.
- Subject of abuse and ridicule due to perceived ability or performance.

Procedures and Management of Bullying

In the first instance, incidents of bullying should be reported to the club via its Club Safeguarding Officer. Club officials must be alert to the signs of bullying and refer cases promptly. Failure to respond to incidents may be interpreted as condoning the behaviour and the club wishes to avoid giving this impression to bullies and victims alike. In the event of an incident of bullying being reported to the club, the club will investigate the incident and talk separately to the those accused of bullying and their alleged victims.

- Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported, whether it's the person being bullied or the person who is bullying.
- People being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to volunteer, play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development.



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On completion of the investigation the Club will decide on appropriate action, such as (but not limited to):

- Obtaining an apology from the bully to the victim.
- Insisting on the return of items removed or stolen.
- Insisting the bully compensate the victim.
- Holding club discussions about bullying.
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying
- If necessary and appropriate police will be consulted
- If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club an initiate disciplinary action under the relevant constitution

IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING ANY FORM OF BULLYING OR SUSPECT ANY BULLYING WITHIN THE CLUB PLEASE CONTACT SAFEGUARDING OFFICER WILL BUTLER (safeguarding@pythonsrugby.co.uk)(ALL DISCUSSIONS WILL TREATED AS CONFIDENTIAL