

. Anti-Bullying Policy

The Camanachd Associations recommended guidelines for use by associated clubs.

Statement of Intent:

Children and young people have a lot to gain from involvement in sport. Like other sports, Shinty provides an opportunity to learn new skills, explore new environments, gain confidence and of course have fun. The full potential of these benefits can only be gained with a positive and progressive approach to the child's involvement. The focus should be on the needs of the child rather than on competition or success. A child-centred approach to Shinty involving children will result in continued participation, a positive public image of our sport and contribute to long-term benefits in terms of the health and well-being of our future adult population.

The Camanachd Association and its entire member clubs are fully committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of their members so they can participate in Shinty in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all club members or parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and appropriately. We are a TELLING club. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Club Child Wellbeing Officer. The Camanachd Association and its member clubs are fully committed to playing their part to educate players on how to treat each other with respect.

The Camanachd Association recognises that anti-bullying is every member's responsibility and that we should safeguard all children involved in Shinty activities organised by staff or volunteers. All members have a right to protection from bullying, and the Camanachd Association policy will be inclusive and take full account of the needs of protected groups, children's rights and others who may be particularly vulnerable.

1. What is Bullying?:

"Bullying is both behaviour and impact; what someone does and the impact it has on the other person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. We call this their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships. It is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out and it can happen face to face and online.

Bullying behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour might not be repeated, the threat that it might can be sustained over time, typically by actions: looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these". *Respectme*, 2017

Bullying can be also be a 'one-off' occurrence or repeated over a period of time, and can take many forms including children being bullied by adults, their peers and in some cases by members of their family. Bullying can be difficult to identify because it often happens away from others and those who are bullied often do not tell anyone. Bullying is not always deliberate.

Examples of bullying **may** include:

- Physical e.g. theft, hitting, kicking (in some cases, this might constitute an assault).
- Verbal (including teasing) e.g. spreading rumours, threats or name-calling, ridicule or humiliation.
- Emotional e.g. isolating a child from the activities or social acceptance of the peer group.
- Cyberbullying e.g. sending insulting messages via text or emails; posting images or upsetting information on social networking sites or forums etc.

- Using abusive or insulting behaviour in a manner which causes alarm or distress.
- Prejudiced based – singling out children who are perceived as different due to, e.g. race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, children who are asylum seekers, looked after children, young carers and so on.
- Having belongings stolen or damaged.
- Being targeted because of who the child is or with who/where/what they are affiliated.

Signs which **may** raise concerns about bullying include:

- hesitation or reluctance to attend training or activity
- reluctance to go to certain places or work with a certain individual
- bruising or other injuries
- becoming nervous and withdrawn
- often last one picked for a team or group activity for no apparent reason, or being picked on when they think your back is turned
- clothing or personal possessions go missing or get damaged
- 'losing' pocket money repeatedly
- suddenly prone to lashing out at people, either physically or verbally, when normally quiet

When talking about bullying, it's never helpful to label children as 'bullies' or 'victims'. Labels can stick for life and can isolate a child, rather than helping them to recover or change their behaviour. It is preferable to talk about someone displaying bullying behaviour rather than label them a 'bully' – behaviour can be changed with help and support.

2. Prejudice Based Bullying:

Prejudice-based bullying is when bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice based on an individual's actual or perceived identity; it can be based on characteristics unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance.

Research has shown that anti-bullying work that undoubtedly addresses the particular needs of vulnerable or minority groups are more effective. There is a need to address the root cause of prejudice as well as effectively responding to incidents as they arise. We need to create environments where diversity is celebrated and name calling and comments based on prejudice are challenged. Some personal characteristics are protected within the law, to address the years of unfavourable treatment experienced by some groups. The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a 'protected characteristic'. These are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Sex
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Prejudice-based bullying includes the protected characteristics mentioned above, but prejudice can and does extend beyond these and can lead to bullying for a variety of reasons.

3. Online Bullying:

For children and young people, online environments are social spaces and like any other place they visit, there are benefits and risks. Adults need to be engaged with children and young people

about where they go online, just as they are when they go into town or to any other 'real' physical place.

It is important that online bullying shouldn't be treated any differently; it's still about behaviour and impact. The behaviour is the same but it takes place online, usually on social networking sites and online gaming platforms, and can include a person being called names, threatened or having rumours spread about them. Online bullying should be addressed in exactly the same way as any other bullying. At The Camanachd Association, our responses will be more consistent and effective when we address online bullying as part of our whole anti-bullying approach, not as a separate area of work or policy.

4. Children's Rights:

It is the right of every child's not to be bullied. Children's rights are unique in that many of them, although designed for the safety and protection of children, have to be provided for by adults and the government.

Children and young people's rights, although covered by the Human Rights Act 1998, are more clearly defined within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) where there are specific articles which focus on 4 broad areas:

- Survival rights
- Development rights
- Protection rights
- Participation rights

Although bullying is not mentioned within the UNCRC or the Human Rights Act, to be bullied can have an impact on a child or young person's survival, development, protection and participation, therefore bullying is an infringement of a child or young person's rights and their basic needs

5. Action to help children on the receiving end of bullying behaviour:

- Cultivate an ethos where there's an anti-bullying culture – it is especially important that adults are good role models for children.
- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns. Help those being bullied to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.
- Take all allegations seriously and take action to ensure the child is safe. Speak with those being bullied and those displaying bullying behaviour separately.
- Reassure the child that you can be trusted and will help them, although you can't promise to tell no-one else.
- Keep records of what is said i.e. what happened, by whom and when.
- In cases of cyberbullying, to advise children who are being bullied by text, email etc. to retain the communication or to print it out.
- Report any concerns to the person in charge at the organisation where the bullying is occurring.

6. Support for children involved in bullying behaviour:

- Talk with the child, explain the situation and try to get them to understand the consequences of their behaviour.
- In some cases it might be worth considering seeking an apology from those involved in bullying behaviour (for example where those on the receiving end wish reconciliation). Apologies are only of real value however, when they are genuine.

- Be sensitive and use good judgement when it comes to informing parents/carers of those whose negative behaviour is impacting on others. Put the child at the centre – will telling the parents/carers result in more problems for the child?
- If appropriate, insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and compensation for the person/people being bullied.
- Impose consequences as necessary, e.g. exclusion from the team until behaviour standards are improved. Sport offers good opportunities for this.
- Encourage and support those displaying bullying behaviour to change this behaviour. Ask them to consider the impact their actions are having.
- Keep a written record of action taken.

7. What can The Camanachd Association or your club do?

Procedures:

1. Report bullying incidents to the Club Child Wellbeing Officer or a member of the clubs committee, or anyone else within the organisation that you feel may be able to help.
2. In all cases of bullying, the incidents will be referred to the Camanachd Associations Child Wellbeing Officer for advice.
3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem. This is a restorative practice that we feel allows for the potential of resolving issues by being open, honest and transparent with each other.
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 in order to limit the potential wellbeing concerns of all of the children and young people involved.
6. An attempt will be made to help all of these involved, in particular to address the behaviour displayed and find alternative way to manage this.
7. If restorative work fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution.

8. In the case of adults reported to be bullying anyone within the club under 18:

1. The Club Child Wellbeing Officer should always be informed and will advise on action to be taken where appropriate; this may include action by the Camanachd Association if deemed necessary.
2. It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a team manager, official or coach, The Camanachd Association Child Wellbeing Officer Education Programme will be notified.
3. If necessary the Police and/or Social Services will be informed.

Creating an anti-bullying ethos is the best prevention. We should not underestimate the importance of the behaviour of adults as they are role models for children.

Strategies and solutions do not come in 'one size fits all'. Each case is unique and requires an individual response to the individual situation. What might work in one situation might not work in another. You might have to adopt different strategies before finding one that is effective.

It is also important to ask for help and support if you need it to deal with a bullying incident so we have included a list of useful contact details for help and advice below.

9. Useful contacts:

- **KIDSCAPE Anti-Bullying Advice for Parents:** 020 7823 5430
- **Family Lives:** 0808 800 2222
- **NSPCC 24 hour help line:** 0808 800 5000
- **Ann Craft Trust:** www.anncrafttrust.org

- **Bullying Online:** www.bullying.co.uk
- **Children's Legal Centre:** 0845 345 4345
- **The Cybersmile Foundation:** 0845 688 7277 www.cybersmile.org
- **KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline:** (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204 www.kidscape.org.uk
- **National Bullying Helpline:** www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk
- **Parentline Plus:** 0808 800 2222
- **Youth Access:** 020 8772 9900