



Waterski & Wakeboard Scotland

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Version 0.1 – Dated: 09/07/20 – Reviewed: 09/02/21 – Next Review: March 2022

1. Introduction

Waterski and Wakeboard Scotland (WWS) is the Scottish Governing Body for the sports of waterski and wakeboarding. Everything we aim to deliver is underpinned by the values of support and positivity. Nothing is more important to us than ensuring that all participants of our wonderful sports feel safe, valued and respected when they visit any of our clubs and venues. We stand wholly against any form of bullying and firmly behind Scotland's national approach to anti-bullying '**Respect for All**' and the principals of '**Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)**'.

WWS believes that bullying of any kind is unacceptable – it breaches the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**, the **Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014** and the **Equality Act of 2010**. We fully agree with Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service: 'Bullying is never acceptable; it doesn't make a person better or stronger to get through it and it should never be seen as a normal part of growing up/life'.

We are 100% committed to challenging any bullying behaviour and language in our clubs/venues/activities and have designed this policy – in consultation with children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers - to explain our stance against bullying, what preventative strategies we will adopt and how we will deal with/expect our clubs to deal with bullying behaviour.

Whether you are staff/volunteer, club/venue, participant or parent/carer - we all have an important role to play in preventing and stamping out bullying.

2. What is bullying

Bullying is a hurtful behaviour that can make a person feel frightened, threatened, left out and hurt. It can take many forms, including:

- Physical – tripping up, hitting, kicking, punching, shoving, any use of violence, as well as theft or damage to someone's belongings.
- Verbal - threats, name-calling, spreading rumours, teasing, putting down or threatening, spreading rumours.
- Emotional - ignoring, leaving out an individual from the activities and social acceptance of the peer group, being unfriendly, excluding, and tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings, threatening gestures).
 - Harassment - using abusive or insulting behaviour in a manner intended to cause alarm or distress.
 - Cyber bullying – abusive texts, emails or messages; vindictive posts on social media platforms; posting things (including while pretending to be someone else) that will ridicule someone or damage their reputation.

- Prejudiced based - targeting someone because of e.g. age, asylum seekers/refugees, body image/physical appearance, disability, gender identify/transphobia, gypsy/travellers, sexual orientation/homophobic, looked after young people, marriage/civil partnership, race/racism, religion or belief, sexism/gender or sectarianism.

4. When is it not bullying?

Adult to Child Behaviours

There are times when adult behaviour towards children can be described as “bullying” such as a parent who pushes too hard, a coach with a ‘win at all costs’ mentality. WWS believes that adults who behave in a manner that causes distress, hurt or upset to a child are behaving on a spectrum that runs from poor practice to abuse and that such behaviour should be dealt with via the WWS Wellbeing & Child Protection policy.

Criminal Behaviour

Some criminal behaviour – such as hate crime, child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse and sexual assault – can overlap with bullying. For instance, when someone is coerced or pressurised to do something sexual or is touched inappropriately, this is not bullying - this is sexual assault or abuse. There are laws to protect people from this type of behaviour.

5. Preventing Bullying

Research has shown that embedding the correct cultures, ethos and behaviour expectations are the most effective means of preventing bullying.

This is why the values of support and positivity underpin everything at WWS. We will always promote positive relationships and behaviours and work to develop a culture of mutual respect and responsibility in all waterski and wakeboard activities. We also aim to support clubs and venues manage bullying by sharing advice and guidance and supporting effective communication.

If any of our staff, volunteers or participants experience bullying, we will seek to understand their experiences – as well as those of the individual who demonstrated the bullying behaviour – so that we can find resolution and support to prevent the situation happening again.

6. Signs of Bullying

It's important that everyone is aware of the possible signs of bullying. These can include a person:

- becoming withdrawn, anxious or seeming to lack confidence. Hesitating or being reluctant to participate, train or attend other club/venue activities
- regularly feeling ill before sessions
- being reluctant to work with another individual
- often being the last one picked for a group activity for no apparent reason
- regularly having clothing or personal possessions going missing or getting damaged
- becoming aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- believing that there is something wrong with them
- being frightened to say if anything is wrong
- suffering from depression/feelings of worthlessness
- starting to stammer
- stopping eating
- exhibiting self-harm behaviours, eating disorders or taking drugs/alcohol

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

7. Responding to bullying

If anyone has any worries that bullying behaviour is happening they share their concerns – for example with parents, a coach, club member or a member of staff.

We are all responsible for stopping bullying. People need to have choices on how they share and report bullying and bullying concerns so any incident of bullying should be considered/handled individually.

First, make sure that the individual feels listened to and is confident that their concerns are being treated seriously. Then, work with them to establish what happened, how it made them feel and what they want to happen now.

Every person is different and it is important that, while inappropriate behaviour is challenged and dealt with, the person experiencing this behaviour has a voice and starts to regain the sense of control over their situation that was lost as part of the bullying cycle. Supporting them to make informed choices will help to restore their sense of worth, develop their resilience and establish positive relationship approaches that will help them to move forward.

People who have exhibited bullying behaviour may also need support to:

- identify the feelings that cause them to act this way
- develop alternative ways of responding to these feelings
- understand the impact of their behaviour on other people
- repair relationships

Labelling people as ‘bullies’ can be unhelpful – labelling the action as bullying is a more effective way of motivating a person to change their behaviour. It is important to distinguish between a person and their behaviour.

Any bullying behaviour must be challenged – but all people, including those causing bullying, should always be treated with respect. This does not take away from the seriousness or impact of bullying behaviour - it’s a solution-oriented approach that is designed to help people change the way they behave without being stigmatised.

People who demonstrate bullying behaviour can be helped by:

- providing clear expectations about behaviour – make use of Codes of Conduct
- discussing ways to repair a relationship, and where appropriate, supporting them to make amends
- challenging prejudice and offering opportunity to learn and change behaviour

Consideration should be given to any factors that may impact upon a person's wellbeing, including whether any additional support for learning is required.

8. Recording and monitoring bullying incidents

Incidents of bullying should be recorded – so that we can ensure that an appropriate response was taken and also so that our policies and training can be informed by the incident.

The following information should be recorded:

- who was involved
- where and when did the behaviour occur
- what type of bullying was experienced, e.g. name-calling, rumours, threats etc
- why underlying prejudice including details of any protected characteristic(s)
- actions taken including resolution at an individual or organisational level

If, at any time, you believe that the incident has led to a Safeguarding issue, you must raise the matter with the Safeguarding Officer.

9. Review

We will gather information from our affiliated clubs regarding incidents of bullying and review this policy annually - as well as after any bullying incidents that are raised with us - engaging with representatives from children, young people, parents/carers and our staff/volunteers when we do so.

Any comments/suggestions/recommendations about its contents can be made at any time by emailing coo@waterskiandwakeboardscotland.co.uk.



Appendix 1 – Actions for Member Clubs

In order to prevent, reduce and respond effectively to bullying behaviour WWS recommends all clubs should implement this policy through:

- Respecting the rights of individuals as paramount.
- Working together to develop positive relationships amongst children and adults that are mutually respectful, responsible and trusting; and promote their emotional health and wellbeing.
- Training, supporting and supervising parents, coaches and volunteers to adopt best practice to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying.
- Addressing the needs of individuals who are bullied as well as those who bully within a framework of respect, responsibility, resolution and support.
- Responding to any concerns raised about poor practice/misconduct or abuse caused by someone's bullying behaviour.
- Highlighting bullying based on prejudice and perceived differences, to ensure our practices are effective in dealing with these issues.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this policy and guidelines (specifically including children's views in this process).
- It is essential that all committee members, coaches, volunteer, parents and children are aware of this policy.