

Orienteering is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all members and participants so they can orienteer in a relaxed environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all orienteers or parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Club Welfare Officer or report it to British Orienteering.

## 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. threatening gestures)
- 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 focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

## 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. Orienteers who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Members of British Orienteering and people taking part in orienteering activities have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

## Objectives of this Policy

- All committee members, coaches and teachers, orienteers and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is
- All committee members, teaching and coaching staff should know what the policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported
- All orienteers and parents should know what the policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises
- Bullying is taken seriously; orienteers and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported
- Bullying will not be tolerated

## Signs and Symptoms

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 training or events
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- feels ill before training sessions or events
- comes home with clothes torn
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay 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

## Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to the club welfare officer or a member of the committee or ring the numbers below
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to British Orienteering for advice
3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour
7. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the British Orienteering or the club will initiate disciplinary action.

## Recommended club action

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation they should follow the procedure outlined below.

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be a genuine apology solves the problem.

2. If this fails or is not appropriate a small panel (made up from Chair, Welfare Officer, Secretary, committee members) should meet with the parent and child alleging bullying to get details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.
3. The same 3 persons should meet with the alleged bully and parent/s and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed.
4. If bullying has in their view taken place the person accused of bullying should be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the bullying continues. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
5. In some cases the parent of the bully or the bullied orienteer can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The Club Welfare Officer should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
6. All coaches involved with the orienteers should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

## In the case of adults reported to be bullying orienteers under 18

1. British Orienteering should always be informed and will advise on action to be taken.
2. It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a teacher or coach, child protection awareness training may be recommended.
3. More serious cases may be referred to the police or social services.

## Prevention:

- The club should have a written constitution, which includes what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members of which the anti-bullying policy is one part.
- All orienteers and parents should sign to accept the constitution upon joining the club.
- The Club Welfare Officer will raise awareness about bullying and why it matters, and if issues of bullying arise in the club, will consider meeting with orienteers to discuss the issue openly and constructively

This policy is based on that provided to schools by KIDSCAPE.

KIDSCAPE is a voluntary organisation committed to help prevent child bullying.

KIDSCAPE can be contacted on 020 8896 3675