

LMRFC Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale

At LMRFC Youth Section we aim to create a safe and secure learning environment where individuals treat each other with respect and understanding. Bullying will not be tolerated at all in our Club. Bullying will be taken seriously, responded to promptly, and procedures followed to deal with the situation. It is the responsibility of every adult working in rugby union whether professional or volunteer, to ensure that all young people can enjoy the sport in a safe enjoyable environment.

- Bullying of any kind is not acceptable within LMRFC. FULL STOP!!

• Aim

To create a positive ethos within the club based on mutual respect and trust

To recognise what bullying is, and to provide effective measures to address bullying issues

What is bullying?

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied.

Children and Young People have described bullying as:

- being called names.
- being teased.
- being hit, pushed, pulled, pinched, or kicked.
- having their bag, mobile or other possessions taken.
- receiving abusive text messages.
- being forced to hand over money.
- being forced to do things they do not want to do.
- being ignored or left out.

- being victimised or attacked because of religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance or ethnic or racial origin.

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour which results in the victim feeling distressed.

Bullying occurs when this behaviour is exercised through the use of power rather than an exchange between equals. This power may be due to greater physical or psychological strength of greater numbers.

Establishing a positive Club ethos

The most important aspect of our strategy to combat bullying is the creation of a positive and inclusive Club ethos. This begins with how adults in the Club treat each other, parents, and players: with respect and understanding, even in difficult situations. Concerns expressed by players and parents are always listened to carefully and taken seriously.

We promote and follow the RFU Code of Conduct:

Everyone involved in rugby in England, whether as a player, coach, referee, administrator, parent or spectator is expected to uphold the Core Values of our sport:

Teamwork – Respect – Enjoyment – Discipline – Sportsmanship

- **Play to win – but not at all cost**
- **Win with dignity, lose with grace**
- **Observe the Laws and regulations of the game**
- **Respect opponents, referees and all participants**
- **Reject cheating, racism, violence and drugs**
- **Value volunteers and paid officials alike**
- **Enjoy the game**

We aim to be constantly promoting and reinforcing positive behaviour and developing all children's self-esteem through celebration of achievement. In this way, by aiming to 'include' everyone in the Club community, it is much less likely either those children will become a focus for bullying, or that others may resort to bullying

We encourage children, parents and staff to report any suspected instances of bullying to one of the coaching staff or to the Club Safeguarding Officer. Children in particular need to be assured NOT to keep worries to themselves, but to tell their parent and/or a Coach. The whole Club community needs to be assured that all instances of bullying are taken very seriously, and investigated thoroughly.

It is essential that the first adult involved in the situation reassures the victim and informs the Club Safeguarding Officer.

Parents of all children involved should be informed at the earliest opportunity, so that their support can be encouraged. Parents are encouraged to:

- **Listen carefully to their child, and reassure them that action will be taken**
- **Stay calm whatever the concerns**
- **Discuss issues with the Club at the earliest opportunity, and review actions regularly**
- **Give the Club time to address the issues**

In the case of a Looked After Child, it is essential that their Social Worker is involved at the earliest opportunity.

Continuation of Bullying

In the event that any child involved continues to bully others, then it will be necessary to initiate further action. Further parental involvement would be essential. If all of these strategies are tried and fail, then ultimately this can lead to permanent exclusion from the Club.

It is essential that all Committee Members, Coaches, Volunteers, parents and children are aware of this policy.

When the policy is revised, it should be discussed with all Coaches & Volunteers involved with children. New Coaches & Volunteers should be made aware of the policy as part of their Induction process. At the start of each Club year, the key points of the policy should be discussed.

Copies of the policy will be available on request, on the Club website and on the RFU website (the RFU general policy).

Comments from parents are very much welcomed.

Procedures and Management of Bullying

1. Report bullying incidents to the LMRFC Safe-guarding Team having made a written record if possible of the event/s warranting investigation. If the incident is an adult bullying a young person, the LMRFC Safe-guarding Team will report the incident to the RFU Child Protection Officer. If the incident is a young person bullying a young person, the club/county will manage this, and can access advice and support from the Club Welfare Officer, CB Welfare Manager or RFU Child Protection Officer at any stage of the process.
2. Parents may be informed and asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
3. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
4. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the Club/CB/RFU can initiate disciplinary action under the relevant constitution.

IMPLEMENTING LMRFC ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Raise Awareness

Raise awareness with all members and players within the club:

- Put posters on the notice board
 - Ensure all young players know they can talk to someone if they are worried
 - Ensure that parents have a copy of the policy
 - Adopt the policy within the club constitution
 - Ensure that the Code of Conduct clearly states that behaviour which constitutes bullying will not be accepted
 - Ensure all coaches, staff and volunteers have signed up the code of conduct
 - Ensure the policy is given to members and players.
 - Set up a working party to support the ongoing development and implementation of the policy.
- Identify any training needs within the club and contact the RFU to find out about workshops and opportunities for support.