

Showjumping Ireland ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Showjumping Ireland aims to create a supportive environment where any form of bullying is unacceptable. Our anti-bullying policy is an integral part of the whole organisation safeguarding policy which states that every child has a right:-

- To participate in **Showjumping Ireland** activities without fear of bullying or racist abuse
- To participate and compete in an environment which is calm and purposeful
- To be confident that they can contribute to the sport without fear of embarrassment or criticism
- To expect that the disruptive behaviour of others will not be allowed affect their own participation
- To be treated courteously by all Members/Officials of **Showjumping Ireland**

Showjumping Ireland are committed to implementing structures and relevant training to deal with allegations of bullying. Incidents of bullying are regarded as serious breaches of our Code of Conduct.

Showjumping Ireland is committed to achieving an ethos of respect so as to maximise the potential of all our members when participating in our events.

Showjumping Ireland's Anti-Bullying Policy sets out our commitments in respect to the above statement.

The policy will outline the following:

- Definition of bullying
- How do we prevent bullying
- Categories of bullying
- Procedures for dealing with bullying
- Support and advice given to young people
- Advice for Parents and Guardians

Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be defined as

- repeated aggression
- whether it is verbal, psychological or physical
- that is conducted by an individual or group against others.
- It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating.

“Bullying is the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights of another or others.”

It includes behaviours such as physical aggression, cyberbullying, damage to property, intimidation, isolation/exclusion, name calling, malicious gossip and extortion.

Bullying can also take the form of abuse based on gender identity, sexual preference, race, ethnicity and religious factors. With developments in modern technology, children can also be the victims of non-contact bullying, via mobile phones, the internet and other personal devices.

While bullying can happen to any child, some may be more vulnerable.

These include:

- children with disabilities or special educational needs;
- children from ethnic minority and migrant groups,
- children of minority religious faiths

Bullying can occur between an adult and young person, young person to young person and adult to adult. **Bullying is not acceptable within Showjumping Ireland .**

The competitive nature of sport can create an environment that provides opportunities for bullying. The bully may be a parent who pushes too hard, a coach who adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy, a young player who intimidates another or an official who places unfair pressure on a person.

Bullying can only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in which it is not safe to do so.

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to young people, to the extent it affects their health and development, or at the extreme, causes them significant harm.

Indications of Bullying

There are a number of signs that may indicate a person is being bullied:

- Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in activities
- Physical signs (unexplained bruises, scratches, or damage to belongings)
- Stress-caused illness – headaches, and stomach aches which seem unexplained
- Fearful behaviour (fear of walking to a training/match, going different routes, asking to be driven)
- Frequent loss of, or shortage of, money with vague explanations
- Having few friends or drop out of newer members
- Changes in behaviour (withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, upset, distressed, not eating, reduced concentration, drop in performance)
- Anxiety (shown by nail-biting, fearfulness, tics)

This list is **not exhaustive** and there are other possible reasons for many of the above. The presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that bullying is actually taking place.

HOW CAN IT BE PREVENTED?

- Ensure that all members follow the Code of Conduct, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member.
- Deal with any incidents as they arise.
- Use a whole group policy or ‘no-blame approach’, i.e., not ‘bullying the bully’ but working with bullies and the group of young people, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing, and so make the problem a ‘shared concern’ of the group.
- Reinforce that there is ‘a permission to tell’ culture rather than a ‘might is right’
- Encourage young people to negotiate, co-operate and help others, particularly new or different children.
- Offer the victim immediate support and put the ‘no blame approach’ into operation
- Never tell a young person to ignore bullying, they can’t ignore it, it hurts too much
- Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands and beat the bully at their own game
- Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault

CATEGORIES OF BULLYING

Prejudice Based Bullying:

Bullying, no matter how it happens or why it happens, is always wrong. To better understand the behaviour and our response, it can be helpful to think about different themes of bullying. Some forms of prejudice based bullying include:

Racial Bullying: When a child or young person experiences bullying based on the colour of their skin, their ethnic or perceived ethnic origin or cultural or religious background

Sectarian Bullying: When a child or young person experiences bullying based on their real or perceived religious or cultural background within the context of the society in Northern Ireland

Disablist Bullying: Bullying behaviour that makes a child or young person feel unwelcome or marginalised based on a perceived or actual disability or special need

Homophobic Bullying: When a child or young person experiences bullying because they are lesbian, gay or bisexual, or because others think they are

Transphobic Bullying: Bullying behaviour that makes a child or young person feel unwelcome or marginalised based on their real or perceived gender identify

CYBER BULLYING

Cyber bullying is bullying that takes place through electronic technologies, such as:

- Mobile or smart phones – eg. calls, texts, BBM, etc.
- Smart phone apps – eg. Kik Messenger, Snapchat, WhatsApp, etc.
- Social network websites – e.g. Facebook, Twitter, askFM, Instagram, etc.
- Gaming consoles – e.g. Xbox Live, PlayStation, etc.

It can involve some of the following incidents through the above outlets:

- Posting hurtful, embarrassing or threatening material (including videos, photo's, comments etc.) about a young person on social media websites
- Sending nasty text messages or leaving rude voicemails on a young person's mobile phone
- Excluding someone from an online game or sports group
- Setting up fake profiles on a social network to make fun of others

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

All incidents of bullying should initially be investigated by an adult within the Branch/Region
In all cases the parents of the young person will be contacted.

Young people who have been bullied will be helped by the following:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the young person became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- Informing parent/guardian(s) of both the victim and the bully about the incident

Who Should Deal With Bullying?

While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and are reported to the statutory authorities, dealing with bullying behaviour is normally the responsibility of all leaders within the organisation/club. You can liaise with the appropriate senior officer, such as your Branch/Regional Chairman; Branch/Regional children's officer, **Showjumping Ireland's** children's officer or the Horse Sport Ireland National Children's Officer.

SUPPORT AND ADVICE GIVEN TO YOUNG PEOPLE

- Do not suffer in silence, there is someone in the organisation you can tell
- If a bullying incident does occur please tell an adult coach/mentor/SJI Children's Officer immediately, or even an older athlete
- Tell a member of your family
- Check out online resources for anti-bullying
- Most importantly do not blame yourself for what has happened.

SUPPORT AND ADVICE FOR PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)

Parents should watch out for signs that their child is being bullied. Early signs may include:

- Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in training/activities
- Physical signs (Unexplained bruises, scratches or damage to belongings)
- Stressed caused illness- headaches or stomach-aches which are not usual for the child
- Fearful behaviour (Fear of walking to training/events, asking to be accompanied)
- Changes to behaviour (Withdrawn, moody, upset, distressed, not eating, drop in sporting performance)

This list is not exhaustive and there may be other possible reasons for many of the above. The presence of one or more of these is not proof bullying is actually taking place but are signs you should monitor and perhaps speak to your child's coach/Children's Officer/Regional Chair if you are concerned.

Further Information

Please refer to the Horsesport Ireland website for further resources on Anti Bullying:

<http://www.horsesportireland.ie/governance/child-protection/>