

Safeguarding Children Board (SCB)

Anti-Bullying Policy for Isle of Man Squash Racket Association

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 and tormenting, (e.g. hiding football boots/shin guards, 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. Individuals who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. **Isle of Man Squash Rackets Association** has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All association members, coaches, officials and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is;
- All association members, officials and coaching staff should know what the association policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported;
- All players and parents should know what the association policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises;
- As an association we take bullying seriously. Players and parents should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported;
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Indicators

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 club sessions;
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- Feels ill before training sessions;
- Comes home with clothes torn or training equipment damaged;
- Has possessions go "missing";
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the 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 the child:

- Starts stammering;
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- Is bullying other children or siblings;
- Stops eating;
- Self harms, attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.

This list is not exhaustive, 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 **Isle of Man Squash Rackets Association** or a member of the association committee.
2. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
3. If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted.
4. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
5. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
6. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the association will initiate disciplinary action under the association constitution.
7. In cases of serious bullying, where there is concern that a child is at risk of significant harm the SCB inter agency child protection procedures should be used which may mean the incidents need to be referred to Children's Social Care for advice.

Recommended club action

If the association 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 that a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails/not appropriate a small panel (made up from Chairman, association 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 individual 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 bullied player can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The association committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
6. All coaches involved with both individuals 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 anyone within the Club under 18 years of age:

1. The **Isle of Man Squash Racket Association** should always be informed and will advise on action to be taken where appropriate.
2. It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a team manager, official or coach, The Safeguarding Children Board Training Programme may be recommended (i.e. training and education)
3. More serious cases may be referred to the Police and/or Children's Social Care.

Prevention

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

This policy is based on guidance provided to schools by KIDSCAPE. KIDSCAPE is a voluntary organisation committed to help prevent child bullying. KIDSCAPE can be contacted on 0207 730 3300 or you can access their website via www.kidscape.org.uk You may also wish to access any of the following websites designed to give advice and guidance to parents and children who are faced with dealing with bullying:

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
www.stoptextbully.com
www.bullying.co.uk