



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Wheathampstead Wanderers FC is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can participate in football in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all club members or parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who encounters bullying in any form should tell the Club Welfare Officer (details on the Club Website) or any Committee Member.

### 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

### Bullying can include:

- Cyberbullying – where a person uses technology, such as a mobile phone or the internet (social networking sites, chat rooms, instant messenger, tweets) deliberately to upset someone
- Trolling – where a person posts deliberately offensive comments on another person's social media pages, aimed at causing upset and distress.

### Key principles

The key principles underpinning this Policy are that:

Everyone involved with the Club in any capacity must clearly understand that bullying will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

The ethos of the Club is that all participants should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

### Indicators of Bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these signs and they should investigate if:

- 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- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence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:

- 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.

### **Club Procedures:**

- 1-Report bullying incidents to the WWFC Welfare Officer or a member of the WWFC Committee or contact the County FA Welfare Officer.
- 2-Parents will be informed and asked to come to a meeting to discuss the issue.
- 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 WWFC will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution.

### **Club Action**

- 7 -Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem
- 8 -If this fails/is not appropriate a small panel from the Club Committee including the Club Welfare Officer will meet with the parent and child alleging bullying to obtain details of the allegation. Minutes will be taken for clarity, which will be agreed by all as a true account
- 9 - The same panel will 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 will again be taken and agreed
- 10- If bullying has in the panel’s view taken place, the individual will be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the bullying continues. Consideration will be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time
- 11- 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 Club Committee will monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated
- 12-. All coaches involved with both individuals will be made aware of the concerns, and the steps to be taken following the Club’s

In the Case of Adults Reported to be Bullying Anyone Within the Club Under the age of 18 The County FA Welfare Officer will always be informed and will advise on action to be taken where appropriate  
 It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a team manager, official or coach, The FA’s Safeguarding Children Education Programme may be recommended  
 More serious cases may be referred to the Police and/or Children’s Services