



BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

PURPOSE	Greensborough Junior Football Club (GJFC) was established in 1964 and is the oldest junior football club in the Diamond Valley area. GJFC is a growing football club that aims to build the Diamond Valley's most inclusive and supportive community sporting club. GJFC is committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from bullying and harassment and that accepts differences and is responsive to individual needs. All club members are entitled to feel safe and gain maximum advantage from their time at GJFC. Coaches, organisers and parents should act as appropriate role models and be vigilant in identifying and dealing with bullying. Players have a responsibility to be caring, positive and supportive of one another, and to use the administrative resources of the club to resolve relationship difficulties.
SCOPE	This policy applies to all members, committee, officials, coaches, players, spectators, visitors and any other volunteers of the club.
POLICY	Bullying is repeated behaviour that is intended to hurt, intimidate, exclude, embarrass or upset another person, whether in person, online or through other forms of communication. Types of bullying may include, but are not limited to: • Physical – pushing, fighting, pinching, misuse or abuse of others' property. • Verbal/written – put downs, name calling, derisive comments, verbal sexual harassment, written graffiti of offensive nature. • Gesture – this can range from dirty looks to making obscene gestures behind peoples' backs, or to their face. • Psychological bullying – ganging up, taking someone's possessions, sending abusive emails or text messages. • Social bullying/exclusion – ignoring or spreading rumours, excluding from group activities. • Cyberbullying – bullying via online means. • Extortion – bullying others into giving up possessions, rights, etc, either physically or manipulatively. • Criticism – severe, continuing and unreasonable, beyond normal discipline by those in authority. • Penalties – imposing unreasonable penalties, beyond policy and generally accepted practices when in authority. Imposition of normal player discipline is not bullying. All participants are involved on a voluntary basis; on the condition they will be cooperative and well-conducted. In addition, football is a team game, requiring adherence to a game plan and reasonable discipline may be applied when players do not work within the scope of the game plan. The game structure or strategy should not be interpreted as a form of bullying. A particular player may not receive as many opportunities for possessions of the ball as others because of allocated positions in a team or game strategy, rather than reflecting players' attitudes to other players. If there are concerns involving this issue, they may be raised respectfully, at an appropriate time, with the coach. Regardless, coaches and parents should provide supervision which makes blatant bullying unlikely to occur and be alert to the possibility of bullying and take any complaints seriously, with support and respect for complainants. On tours and away matches, sustained interaction increases the risk of bullying. The coach, organiser or team manager should emphasise before the commencement of such activities, that the acceptance of differences, support for each other and respect for private and personal space are important. Particularly on tours, it should be made clear, that bullying is not acceptable and individuals found to be partaking in bullying behaviour will be penalized accordingly.



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Signs a person is being bullied

A person, especially a child, may not always ask for support when being bullied. They may feel afraid, ashamed or embarrassed and that the person they tell will think less of them. The victim may feel they are 'dobbing' by telling someone what is happening to them.

The following are some signs that a person may be being bullied:

- Finds excuses for not wanting to attend training/games or talking about hating their sport.
- Wants to change the way they get to training/games.
- Regularly the last one picked for team or group activities.
- Alienated from social or shared activities.
- Has bruising or other injuries.
- Becomes uncharacteristically nervous, worries, shy or withdrawn.
- Clothing or personal items are missing or damaged.
- Repeatedly 'loses' money or possessions.
- Suddenly prone to lashing out at people either physically or verbally.

Bullying and the law

Bullying can have serious consequences. All bullying breaches club rules, however, some forms of bullying, such as physical assault, threats, discrimination, stalking or online abuse may also be unlawful. The Club takes all reports of bullying seriously and will take appropriate action to protect the safety and wellbeing of participants.

Bullying and Harassment

GJFC will not allow or tolerate bullying or harassment. The behaviour is damaging to all involved. Players, parents, coaches, committee and volunteers all have the ethical and legal responsibility to take action to prevent bullying and harassment in sport and to manage it, should it occur. GJFC encourages all members to be proactive and not be bystanders if bullying occurs.

There are two phases of dealing with bullying:

1. Identify the problem.
2. Solve the problem.

GJFC requests the assistance of parents in discouraging, identifying and, if necessary, supervising to prevent bullying, and cooperating in the education and discipline of those involved in any bullying conduct.

Where bullying outside or inside the club has made the participation of players in the same team inappropriate, parents are requested to provide early information to the relevant coach or team manager. If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily by the coach/team manager, the matter should be referred by the coach to the committee to be dealt with. In doing so, the coach should outline the steps that have been taken to that point to resolve the matter.

Where a situation or instance of bullying involves the coach or team manager directly, parents should provide early notification to a committee member or the Child Safety Officer.

Breach of Policy

Any instances of bullying and harassment that is made known to the committee or coaching staff will be reported to the Child Safety Officer for investigation. The Child Safety Officer will make contact with the victim and their family to investigate the concern/incident and determine the appropriate action to be taken.



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Policy Review and Ownership

The contents of this document represent the current policy and procedures of GJFC.
This policy is subject to review every two years and will be amended appropriately.
Amendments will be communicated to members as and when appropriate to ensure that it remains current.

Approved by GJFC Committee.

Authorised by

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Scott Devers
President GJFC

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