



Anti Bullying Policy 2026/27

What is Bullying?

Statement of Intent

Halesowen Town Colts are 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 anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected. **Halesowen Town Colts** is committed to playing its part to teach players to treat each other with respect. Bullying can consist of any of the below:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically) sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding football boots/shin guards, threatening gestures).
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Discrimination, racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, homophobic comments, jokes about disabled people, sexist comments,
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

Cyberbullying

This is when a person uses technology i.e. mobile phones or the internet (social networking sites, chat rooms, instant messenger, tweets), to deliberately upset someone. Bullies often feel anonymous and 'distanced' from the incident when it takes place online and 'bystanders' can easily become bullies themselves by forwarding the information on. There is a growing trend for bullying to occur online or via texts – bullies no longer rely on being physically near to the young person.

Trolling

This is the name given to posting deliberately offensive comments on people's social media pages aimed at causing upset and distress. This type of behaviour could result in legal action.

Our Commitment

Halesowen Town Colts commits to ensure our website/ websites and/or social networking pages are being used appropriately and any online bullying will be dealt with swiftly and appropriately in line with procedures detailed in this policy.

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. **Halesowen Town Colts** has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All club members, coaches, officials, and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All club members, coaches, officials, and parents should know what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All players and parents should know what the club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a club 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
- have 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.

Bullying as a result of any form of discrimination Bullying because of discrimination occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against certain people or groups of people. This may be because of their gender, age, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability or ability. Generally, these forms of bullying look like other sorts of bullying, but in particular it can include:

Verbal abuse

derogatory remarks about girls or women, suggesting girls and women are inferior to boys and men, or that black, Asian and ethnic minority people are not as capable as white people; spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that someone is inferior and so they are “gay” – for example, “you’re such a gay boy!” or “those trainers are so gay!” Ridiculing someone because of a disability or mental health-related issue, or because they have a physical, mental or emotional developmental delay. Referring to someone by the colour of their skin, rather than their name; using nicknames that have racial connotations; isolating someone because they come from another country or social background etc.

Physical abuse

including hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault, and threatening behaviour.

Cyberbullying

using online spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them. It can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging.

Club Policy

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation, we will 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 the Chairperson, Club Welfare Officer, Secretary, and 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 club 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

1. The County FA Welfare Officer should always be informed and will advise on action to be taken where appropriate, this may include action by The FA Safeguarding Team
2. It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation FA's Safeguarding Children Education Programme may be recommended.
3. More serious cases may be referred to the Police and/or Children's Social Care .

Prevention:

- The club 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.
- All club members and parents will sign to accept the constitution upon joining the club

The Club 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.

Reviewd May 2026