



Southend Invictus Anti-Bullying Policy

We believe that everybody has the right to participate in football free from bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation or victimisation. Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated and all concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon appropriately.

This policy applies to all club activities, including:

- Training sessions
- Matches and tournaments
- Social events
- Club trips and transport
- Online activity, including social media, messaging apps and group chats
- Any activity involving club members, coaches, volunteers or supporters

What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group which deliberately hurts, intimidates, excludes or undermines another person.

Bullying may happen once or be repeated over time.

Bullying can be:

Physical

- Hitting, kicking, pushing or unwanted physical contact
- Damaging personal belongings

Verbal

- Name-calling
- Teasing
- Insults
- Threats
- Offensive comments

Emotional or Psychological

- Excluding someone from activities
- Spreading rumours
- Intimidation
- Manipulation
- Humiliation

Online (Cyberbullying)

- Sending hurtful messages
- Posting offensive comments or images
- Creating fake profiles
- Excluding people from online groups
- Sharing private information without permission

Disability-Related Bullying

Bullying linked to a person's disability, additional needs, learning difference, communication style or support needs.

Examples include:

- Mocking someone's disability
- Copying or making fun of speech, movement or behaviour
- Excluding someone because of their disability
- Treating someone unfairly because they require support

Discriminatory Bullying

Bullying related to:

- Disability
- Race or ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Sex or gender
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Age
- Any other protected characteristic

Our Commitment

Southend Invictus Football Club will:

- Promote a culture of respect, kindness and inclusion.
- Ensure all members understand that bullying is unacceptable.
- Encourage individuals to speak up if they experience or witness bullying.
- Respond promptly and fairly to all concerns.
- Take appropriate action where bullying is identified.
- Support anyone affected by bullying.
- Ensure nobody is victimised for reporting concerns.

Expectations of Members

All players, coaches, volunteers, parents, carers and supporters are expected to:

- Treat others with dignity and respect.
- Be supportive and inclusive.
- Value individual differences and abilities.
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour safely where appropriate.
- Report bullying concerns promptly.
- Follow instructions from club officials regarding safeguarding matters.

Everybody has a responsibility to help create a positive environment.

Reporting Bullying

Any person who experiences, witnesses or becomes aware of bullying should report it as soon as possible.

Concerns may be reported to:

- The Club Welfare Officer
- A coach or team manager
- A committee member
- Any trusted club official

Parents, carers and support workers are encouraged to raise concerns on behalf of vulnerable children or adults where appropriate.

All reports will be treated seriously and sensitively.

Responding to Concerns

When a bullying concern is reported, the club will:

1. Listen carefully to all parties involved.
2. Record the concern appropriately.
3. Consider any safeguarding risks.
4. Investigate the issue fairly and proportionately.
5. Take action where necessary.
6. Provide support to those affected.
7. Monitor the situation to prevent recurrence.

Where safeguarding concerns involve a child or an adult at risk, the Club Welfare Officer will follow FA safeguarding procedures and may refer the matter to relevant statutory agencies.

Possible Actions

Depending on the seriousness of the behaviour, action may include:

- Informal discussion and education
- Apology and restorative conversation
- Behaviour agreement
- Parental/carer involvement
- Written warning
- Temporary suspension from club activities – this includes not being allowed to participate in training and/or matches.
- Permanent exclusion from the club

Serious incidents involving threats, hate incidents, harassment, discrimination or safeguarding concerns may be referred to:

- The County FA
- The Football Association
- Police
- Children's Social Care
- Adult Social Care

Support for Those Affected

The club recognises that bullying can have a significant impact on wellbeing, confidence and participation.

Support may include:

- Listening and emotional support
- Additional welfare monitoring
- Adjustments to training or participation arrangements
- Support for parents, carers or support workers
- Signposting to specialist services where appropriate

Online Behaviour

Club members must behave respectfully when using:

- WhatsApp groups
- Social media platforms
- Email
- Text messaging
- Online gaming or communication platforms linked to club members

Online bullying will be treated as seriously as face-to-face bullying.

The club reserves the right to take action where online behaviour impacts the safety, wellbeing or reputation of club members.