

This policy and the guidance outlined below apply to England, Wales and Northern Ireland. For Scotland please contact the SCA direct, contact details are included under useful contacts.

Statement of Intent

British Canoeing is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can participate in our sport in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all paddlers or parents should be able to *tell* and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* organisation. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the club welfare officer or any committee member.

Please note: This policy refers to bullying of children and young people.

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 include:

Physical	e.g. pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence and theft.
Verbal	e.g. name calling, constant teasing, sarcasm, racial or homophobic taunts, graffiti, gestures.
Sexual	e.g. unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
Emotional	e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring
Cyber	All areas of internet, e.g. email, social media and internet chat room misuse. Mobile phone threats by text message, calls, photos and video.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect. Paddlers who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All committee members, coaches, volunteers and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All committee members, coaches, volunteers should know what the club/ centre policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All junior paddlers and parents should know what the club/ centre policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As an organisation we take bullying seriously. Junior paddlers and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms

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:

- 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 possessions damaged or missing
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- is bullying other children or siblings
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone

In more extreme cases

- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- stops eating
- runs away or attempts or threatens suicide

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to your Club Welfare Officer or a member of the committee.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents should be referred to British Canoeing for advice or contact one of the organisations listed below.
3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

Recommended Action

If the club 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 or is not appropriate, a panel should meet with the parents/ carers and child alleging bullying to obtain exact details of the allegation. The panel should comprise of

the club Chair, the Club Welfare Officer (CWO) and one other committee member. Minutes should be taken for clarity; these must be agreed and signed as a true account.

3. The same panel should meet with the alleged bully and their parents/ carers to put the allegation to them. They will be asked to answer and give their account of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity; these must be agreed and signed as a true account.
4. If bullying has, in the panel's view, taken place the person should be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension should the bullying continue. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
5. In some cases the parent/ carer of the bully or victim of bullying can be asked to be present at the club with the young person each time they attend, if appropriate.
6. The club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not continuing.
7. All coaches/ instructors and volunteers involved with both parties should be made aware of the concerns and sanctions.

In the case of adults alleged to be bullying:

- The Club Welfare Officer (CWO) or home nation equivalent will follow British Canoeing safeguarding children policies and procedures.
- British Canoeing should always be informed and will provide advice on action to be taken.
- British Canoeing will treat the allegation as a child protection concern.

Prevention

- The club will adopt British Canoeing Safeguarding Children Policy and procedures. This includes codes of conduct for all members and an anti-bullying policy.
- All members will sign to accept the club/ centre child protection policy upon joining the club.
- The Club Welfare Officer will raise awareness of bullying within the club. If issues of bullying arise then they will consider meeting with the paddlers to discuss the issue openly and constructively.

We acknowledge our thanks to KIDSCAPE who provide this policy for schools. KIDSCAPE is a voluntary organisation committed to help prevent child bullying.

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

KIDSCAPE Anti-Bullying Advice for Parents	020 7823 5430
Family Lives	0808 800 2222
NSPCC 24 hour help line	0808 800 5000