

DCC Anti-Bullying Policy

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This Policy shall be applied consistently in relation to all Devizes Canoe Club volunteers and participants, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

The policies and guidelines referenced within this document are those of Paddle UK. All references to Paddle UK within this policy also refer to Paddle England, Paddle Cymru, Paddle Scotland and Paddle Northern Ireland.

Statement of Intent

Devizes Canoe Club is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of its members so they can paddle 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 Safeguarding Officer or any committee member.

This policy aims to inform members of Devizes Canoe Club of our procedures in relation to bullying concerns and also to help embed a positive culture whereby bullying behaviours are less likely to occur.

Bullying is: behaviour by an individual or group that is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting including an abuse or misuse of power; that undermines, humiliates, excludes, or causes physical, emotional or psychological harm to someone.

Power in this context does not always mean being in a position of authority but can include personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation.

Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct. It may be a pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident and can be deliberate (typically) or inadvertent. Bullying can happen face-to-face, on social media, or via written or oral communications. Bullying can be adult on adult, adult on child and child on child.

Physical Bullying - This is behaviour such as pushing, kicking, hitting, slapping, punching, tripping, spitting or any other use of violence.

Verbal Bullying - This is behaviour such as name calling, constant teasing, sarcasm, racial or homophobic taunts, targeted graffiti or targeted gestures.

Sexual Bullying - Can be unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature, intentionally bumping into, grabbing, stroking, pinching private areas etc. or sexually abusive or inappropriately suggestive comments. In addition, the use of sexual material (texts, pictures, video, voice messaging,) involving the person in order to humiliate them could also be classed as "revenge porn" which is a crime.

***Any bullying of a sexual nature aimed at children under 18 years of age would be considered child sexual abuse and would be treated as such in line with the Paddle UK Safeguarding Children Policy:** <https://paddleuk.org.uk/safeguarding-policies>

Emotional Bullying – Examples include things like tormenting, ridiculing, intentionally leaving someone out or persuading others to do so, public and/or private humiliation, gaslighting or participating in negative gossip.

Cyber Bullying – Includes bullying that occurs on all areas of internet, such as email, social media and internet chat rooms, private messaging and forum messaging boards. Cyber bullying also includes the use of mobile phones e.g. text messages, calls, photos and video.

Bullies often target those that they perceive as different. Those with disabilities: visible differences, special educational needs or who are neurodiverse, children in care, young carers, those from minority ethnic backgrounds, those living in poverty, those who have exceptional gifts and/or talents and those who are exploring their sexuality or those that do not conform to gender norms are often targeted.

As a club we embrace diversity and by ensuring we respond to bullying we ensure equal opportunity, value, and respect for all members.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying can cause long term psychological harm. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying and everyone has the right to be treated with respect and dignity at all times. Paddlers who are experiencing bullying have the right to be protected and those engaging in bullying behaviour need to be stopped from these behaviours as well as being educated as to how to behave in the future.

The objectives of this Policy are:

- To ensure that all committees, disciplines, coaches, athletes, paddlers (inc. children and young people), volunteers and parents understand what bullying is and are able to identify the behaviours that contribute towards it.
- To ensure that all committee members, coaches, volunteers know what the club/centre policy and procedures on bullying are, and follow them if bullying is reported.
- To ensure all members of Devizes Canoe Club including junior paddlers, their parents/carers and adults know what the club/centre policy and procedures on bullying are, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- To give Devizes Canoe club members, coaches, volunteers, paddlers and parents/carers the confidence to challenge bullying behaviour or raise concerns about bullying with the appropriate person.
- At Devizes Canoe Club, we take bullying seriously. Anyone reporting bullying should be assured that they will be supported appropriately when raising a concern.

Bullying within Devizes Canoe Club will **not be tolerated.**

Indicators and Behaviours

A victim of bullying may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Coaches, volunteers and parents/carers should be aware of these possible signs and they should make further enquiries if a person:

- 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 the bully);

- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- is bullying other children or siblings;
- is frightened or unwilling to say what's wrong;
- is afraid to use or is unusually disinterested in using the internet or mobile phone
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above;

In more extreme cases you may see some of the following behaviours:

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

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

What to do if Bullying Occurs

Reporting Process

Report bullying incidents to the relevant person in your organisation (i.e. Club/Centre Welfare Officer, Discipline Safeguarding Officer, or a member of the Club Committee) as soon as you become aware of the issue. The club's Welfare and Safeguarding Officer is Jenny Jones with Hannah Snowhill alongside as Deputy. Their details can be found on the posters around the club as well as the club website.

Parents/carers of children who are being bullied, should be informed of the issues.

If necessary and appropriate, police or other statutory agencies should be consulted.

Recommended Action

Once an organisation becomes aware of a bullying report/referral, they must ensure:

- That the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying are properly investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
- That where appropriate, attempts will be made to support the bully/bullies to understand the impact of their behaviour and be supported to change their behaviour.
- That incidents or allegations of bullying are managed promptly and independently following the organisations own policies and procedures.

If appropriate and proportionate to the behaviour being presented, this might include informal action such as reconciliation and mediation meetings and apologies.

If an organisation cannot manage an incident or report of bullying, or those involved feel the issue is not resolved sufficiently, then Devizes Canoe Club's Safeguarding Team can be contacted for advice, guidance and support. In addition, upon receipt of a report of bullying, Devizes Canoe Club reserves the right to take such action as is appropriate under the **Paddle UK Disciplinary and Appeal Regulations or Safeguarding Procedure** (<https://paddleuk.org.uk/our-policies-and-procedures>).

If the concern is in relation to children or young people being the recipient of bullying from an adult, you must inform Paddle UK's Safeguarding Team, in line with the **Paddle UK Safeguarding Children Policy** (<https://paddleuk.org.uk/safeguarding-policies>).