



BULLYING POLICY STATEMENT

Glen Waverley Hawks Football Club is a bullying free club. We are committed to providing all club members with a healthy and safe environment free from bullying and intimidation. Bullying is not an acceptable part of our club culture. Bullying can harm a person's health and wellbeing.

Bullying is repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a club member or team representative that creates a risk to health and safety. It can include behaviour such as physical abuse, verbal abuse, initiation practices, ridiculing someone's opinions or humiliating someone through sarcasm or insults.

Anyone who experiences or witnesses bullying should report it to a Committee Member as soon as possible. When bullying is reported, it will be investigated quickly. Where necessary disciplinary action or exclusion from the club may result, should all other forms of mediation fail.

All team players, team representatives, committee members and parents have a responsibility to comply with this policy and to treat everyone within the club with dignity and respect.

The Committee

Glen Waverley Hawks Football Club



BULLYING POLICY

Every person in sport, in every role, has the right to participate in an environment that is fun, safe and healthy, and to be treated with respect, dignity and fairness.

Bullying denies participants these rights and can result in feelings of disgrace, embarrassment, shame or intimidation. Bullying can also affect an individual's athletic performance, level of enjoyment, work or school life, academic achievement and physical and mental health.

Research has shown that one in six Australian students are bullied every week, and are three times more likely to develop depressive illnesses.

Bullying can occur both on and off the sports pitch and can involve athletes, parents, coaches, spectators or umpires. Some forms of bullying constitute assault, harassment or discrimination under federal and state legislation and are therefore illegal.

What is Bullying?

Glen Waverley Hawks Football Club deem bullying as deliberately hurting a specific person either physically, verbally, psychologically or socially. It involves a power imbalance where one person has power or strength (e.g. physical, mental, social or financial) over another and can be carried out by one person or several people who are either actively or passively involved. In a sports context bullying can take many forms, for example:

- a parent telling their child that they are incompetent, hopeless, useless, etc.
- a coach alienating an athlete
- several people ganging up on an individual team member
- spectators verbally abusing players from the opposition
- an athlete calling a referee names and using put downs and insults
- a parent intimidating a young coach

Bullying can be a 'one-off' incident, but usually involves repeated actions or incidences. It can occur everywhere; at home, school, work, playgrounds, while participating in sport, when using public transport or walking to or from home. An individual may bully their victim face to face or use technology such as a mobile phone or computer.

Types of Bullying

Physical	pushing, shoving, punching, hitting, kicking, taking away a person's belongings (this may also constitute assault).
Verbal	name calling, banter, threatening, teasing, intimidating, yelling abuse, using put downs.
Psychological	ganging up, preventing a person from going somewhere, taking a person's possessions, sending hostile or nasty emails or text messages.
Socially	excluding, alienating, ignoring, spreading rumours.



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Bullying behaviour is damaging to all involved: the bully, victim, family members, those that witness the behaviour and the Glen Waverley Hawks Football Club. Athletes, parents, coaches, administrators and the Glen Waverley Hawks all have an ethical responsibility to take action to prevent bullying occurring within the club and manage it, should it occur.

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 they are weak. Victims of bullying may think that they deserve to be bullied or are 'dobbing' by telling someone what is happening to them.

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

- finds excuses for not wanting to attend training or games (e.g. feeling sick, has an injury, has too much work to do) or talking about hating their sport
- wants to be driven to training or matches instead of walking
- regularly the last one picked for team or group activities
- alienated from social or shared activities
- has bruising or other injuries
- becomes uncharacteristically nervous, worried, shy or withdrawn
- clothing or personal possessions are missing or are damaged
- repeatedly 'loses' money or possessions
- suddenly prone to lashing out at people either physically or verbally

Managing bullying

Bullying is more likely to occur in environments that are highly competitive and promote a 'win at all cost' mentality. We believe that by emphasising other aspects of sport such as enjoyment, team work, sportsmanship and skill development, especially at the junior level, that we may be able to prevent bullying behaviours.

Glen Waverley Hawks Football Club will not allow or tolerate bullying. There are several things that coaches, parents and administrators can do to prevent bullying occurring and assist both the victim/s and the bully(ies).



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Action to help the victim/s

- Take all signs of bullying seriously. Show interest and sympathy with every allegation of bullying and provide support (remember that it takes a lot of courage for a child to admit they are being bullied)
- Ensure the victim/s are safe.
- Some forms of bullying constitute assault, harassment or discrimination under federal and state legislation and are therefore illegal. Seek advice from your state department of sport and recreation, human rights or equal opportunity commission if you suspect the behaviour breaches legislation.
- We encourage members to speak out and tell someone – a parent, coach, manager or senior club member – if they are being bullied or if they witness bullying.
- Reassure the victim/s that you will help them. Also advise them that to help them you may need to tell others about the problem (i.e. do not say you will not tell anyone.)
- Speak with the bully(ies) and victim/s separately. If children are involved also speak to their parents. Keep records of what was said (i.e. what happened, who was involved, when did the incidents occur, how the matter was handled).
- Telling the victim/s to 'ignore' the bully rarely works. Experts agree that a passive or distressed reaction can encourage the bully(ies) because it is the reaction they are looking for.
- After a period of time, follow up with the victim/s (and parents if appropriate) to find out if the bullying has stopped.

Action towards the bully(ies)

- Talk with the bully(ies) (but not in the presence of the victim/s), explain the situation and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. If children are involved also speak to their parents. Keep records of what was said (i.e. what happened, who was involved, when the incidents occurred, how the matter was handled)
- The bully may want to apologise to the victim/s for their behaviour.
- If appropriate, insist on the return of borrowed items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- If necessary impose sanctions
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change their behaviour
- Monitor the behaviour of the bully(ies) over a period of time.



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What can I do if I am being bullied?

While it may not seem like it, you do have options. There is always something you can do. What you do will depend on many factors, including the type of bullying that occurred, the support available to you and what approach you want to take to manage the bullying. Below are suggestions from people that have been bullied and experts in the field. Please note that bullying takes many forms, and different approaches need to be considered. What works for one person in a particular situation may not work for another person. Think about the suggestions below and which are most suitable for your particular circumstances.

- Speak out and tell someone – a parent, coach, manager or senior club member – if you are being bullied. Explain to them what is happening and that you want the bullying to stop.
- If possible, avoid the bully and being alone with the bully.
- Do not travel to and from training and games alone.
- In some situations ignoring the bully can work, for example if it is a one-off incident and is non-threatening verbal abuse. Remember, however, that ignoring the bully will not always work. Some types of bullying (e.g. physical and psychological) should not be ignored.
- Be aware of how you react when bullied and if necessary modify your reaction. Experts agree that a passive or distressed reaction can encourage the bully(ies) because it is the reaction they are looking for. Try reacting in a calm, assertive manner.
- Consider confronting the bully(ies) and standing up to them. You could say, “What did I do to you?” But do not react by physically hurting them as you will most likely find yourself in trouble.
- Research bullying on the web or obtain a book by a respected expert that provides strategies for dealing with bullying.



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Club Contacts

If you are being bullied or know someone who is, please report the incident(s) to one of the below committee members:

Junior Club Co-ordinator – Janine Meachen

Ph: 9886 3771

email: janinemeachen@optusnet.com.au

President – Gary Hocking

Ph: 0410 649 208 / 9707 9525

email: HockingG@gelpack.com.au

Vice President – Senior Football Club – Robert Taylor

Ph: 0408 316 102 / 9758 2177

email: robert@airfour.com.au

Secretary – Graham Dancey

Ph: 0401 662 813 / 9763 8079

email: gdancey@optusnet.com.au

Of course if you have another committee member you would prefer to speak to, there is a full contact list on our website:

www.glenwaverleyhawks.com