



Naas LTC – Child Protection Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Naas LTC is aware of the potential for bullying behavior to take place within the Club. The Club recognises its duty of care and responsibility to safeguard all participants from harm.

This policy is in addition to the Club Safeguarding policy and procedures. Everybody in Naas LTC has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying.

Bullying can include online as well as offline behaviour. Bullying behaviour of any kind will not be accepted or condoned by the Club.

This policy outlines the actions that will be taken to investigate and respond to any alleged incidents of bullying.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is defined as unwanted negative behavior, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time,

Bullying can include:

- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc.
- Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation or the continual ignoring of individuals.
- Posting of derogatory or abusive comments, videos or images on social network sites.
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, sectarianism, sexual comments, suggestions or behaviour.
- Unwanted physical contact.

Each Tennis Coach, Leader, volunteer, official or player will:

- Respect every child's need for, and rights to, a play environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect the feelings and views of others.
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special and should be valued.



- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.
- Be committed to the early identification of bullying, and prompt and collective action to deal with it.
- Ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained and displayed.
- Report incidents of bullying they see to the Club Childrens's Officers (if they cannot be resolved as they occur) – **by doing nothing you are condoning bullying.**

Procedures to respond to Bullying Behaviour as an issue happens

If a Tennis Coach / Leader or volunteer becomes aware of a bullying issue while he or she is responsible for a tennis activity he or she should attempt to deal with the issue immediately, if that is possible. He or she should talk to all the people involved in the bullying behaviour at the same time and try to reach an agreement about what happened. He or she should then highlight Naas LTC's Codes of Conduct and the Anti-Bullying Policy with a reminder about acceptable behaviour in the Club.

If the Tennis Coach / Leader decides it is necessary to impose immediate sanctions to deal with the bullying behaviour he or she should do so. Both the parents of all involved and the Club Children's Officer should be informed of the issue.

The Club expects parents and all adults involved with the Club to be supportive of the immediate resolution process. It is better for all young people involved to sort issues immediately and quickly, where possible.

Procedures to respond to Reports of Bullying after the Event

All allegations of incidents of bullying should be reported in the first instance to either of the Club Children's Officers.

All reports will be listened to carefully and anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be supported. Records will be kept of all reports received. The Club Children's Officer will assess the bullying behaviour based on:

- Information from the target of the behaviour
- How long the bullying behaviour has been going on.
- How often the bullying behaviour is happening.
- Is there an intention to cause harm to the target of the bullying behaviour.



Where appropriate any incident of bullying will be discussed with the parents/guardians of all involved.

A “**No Blame**” approach will be taken in response to the report, where appropriate. The No Blame approach seeks to find a resolution for the young people involved in the bullying behaviour whilst maintaining their relationship within the Club. This is important for any young people who often simply want bullying behaviour to stop, without a need for punishment to be imposed. This approach encourages young people to recognize the impact of their behaviour and then to take responsibility for changing it.

- The problem will be **explained** to those involved, including how any victims may be feeling, without accusing anyone.
- All present will be **asked** for ideas as to how to resolve the situation
- Those present will be **left** to put their ideas into practice
- A **follow up meeting or meetings** will be held to see if behaviour has changed and if the situation is resolved.

Bullying behaviour is a breach of a code of conduct and it may have to be dealt with through a disciplinary process. However, the Club aims to resolve issues through the No Blame approach in the first instance.

All incidents of bullying and details of steps taken to address them will be recorded. Records will be confidential and will be kept in a locked cabinet in the Club office.

While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and are reported to the Health Services Executive or An Garda Síochana, dealing with bullying behaviour amongst young people in the club will, in the first instance, be the responsibility of the club’s Children’s Officers.