

Square FC & Square Rangers Anti-Bullying Policy

(Originally drafted: 20 July 2007 / Last updated: 6 August 2007)

Introduction:

Square FC provides football on Saturday mornings for children and young people aged 9 to 18. All Square FC teams play in the Christian Youth Football League.

Square Rangers provides football on Saturday mornings for children and young people aged up to 13. Square Rangers plays in the South Beds Saturday League.

Definitions:

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 be:

- **EMOTIONAL** - being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages, tormenting (e.g. hiding football boots/shin guards, making threatening gestures)
- **PHYSICAL** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **RACIST** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **SEXUAL** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **HOMOPHOBIC** - because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
- **VERBAL** - sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, name-calling

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

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

This policy is based on guidance provided to schools by KIDSCAPE. KIDSCAPE is a voluntary organisation committed to help prevent child bullying. KIDSCAPE can be contacted on 0207 730 3300 or you can access their website via www.kidscape.org.uk

You may also wish to access another website designed to give advice and guidance to parents/carers and children who are faced with dealing with bullying:
www.bullying.co.uk

Policy Statement:

1. Square FC and Square Rangers acknowledge and endorse The FA's identification of bullying as a category of abuse. Bullying of any kind is not acceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all players, parents or guardians should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. Incidents need to be reported to the Club Welfare Officer (CWO), a member of the committee or, in cases of serious bullying, the County FA Child Protection Officer (CFA CPO).
2. All players, managers/coaches and their assistants, match officials and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is. They should know what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
3. Square FC and Square Rangers take bullying seriously. Players, managers/coaches and their assistants, match officials and parents/carers should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported.
4. All players, managers/coaches and their assistants, match officials and parents/carers should have an appreciation of the signs and indicators of bullying.

Square FC & Square Rangers Anti-Bullying Policy

(Originally drafted: 20 July 2007 / Last updated: 6 August 2007)

5. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our players so they can participate in football in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.
6. If bullying does occur, all players, managers/coaches and their assistants, match officials and parents/carers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING club. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Club Welfare Officer (CWO) or a member of the committee.
7. A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that she or he is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:
 - says they are being bullied
 - 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 training equipment damaged
 - has possessions go 'missing'
 - asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
 - has unexplained cuts or bruises
 - is frightened to say what's wrong
 - gives improbable excuses for any of the above

Or, in more extreme cases, if a child:

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

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

Anti-Bullying Procedures:

1. Report bullying incidents to the Club Welfare Officer (CWO), a member of the committee or, in cases of serious bullying, the County FA Child Protection Officer (CFA CPO).
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents referred to the CFA CPO for advice may also be referred to the FA Case Management System. If necessary and appropriate, the police and/or social services will be consulted.
3. Parents/carers should be informed and will be asked to come in for a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. All bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
5. An attempt will be made to help the bully (or bullies) change their behaviour.
6. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will initiate appropriate disciplinary action.

Square FC & Square Rangers Anti-Bullying Policy

(Originally drafted: 20 July 2007 / Last updated: 6 August 2007)

Recommended Club Action:

1. If the club decides to deal with allegations of bullying the following procedures should be followed – in line with the FA Anti-Bullying Policy for Football Clubs Recommended

Guidelines:

- attempt to reconcile the parties by getting them together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem
 - if reconciliation fails (or is not appropriate) a panel of three people made up from the Chairperson, Club Welfare Officer, Secretary and other committee members should meet with the parents/carers and child alleging bullying to gather information. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account
 - the same panel of three people should meet with the alleged bully and parents/carers and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed
 - if, in the view of the panel, bullying has taken place, the individual should be warned and put on notice of further action, i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the bullying continues. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time
 - in some cases the parents/carers of the bully or bullied player can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated
 - all coaches involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process, i.e. the warning
2. In the case of adults reported to be bullying anyone under the age of 18:
 - the County FA Child Protection Officer (CFA CPO) should always be informed and will advise on action to be taken where appropriate
 - it is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a team manager, official or coach, the FA's Child Protection and Best Practice awareness training may be recommended
 - more serious cases may be referred to the police and/or social services
 3. Prevention:
 - the club's various codes of conduct make clear what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members of the club
 - all club members and parents will be expected to read and accept the relevant codes of conduct
 - the Club Welfare Officer will raise awareness about bullying and why it matters, and if issues of bullying arise in the club, will consider meeting with members to discuss the issue openly and constructively
 4. Further advice on child protection matters can be obtained from:
 - the County Football Association's Child Protection Officer, whose details can be found in the County Handbook
 - the joint FA-NSPCC Child Protection 24-Hour Helpline: 0808 800 5000
 - the FA's website: www.TheFA.com/Goal
 5. The Square FC & Square Rangers Club Welfare Officer (CWO) is: Rupert Kaye (Tel: 01582 663639 Email: rupertkaye@aol.com)