



The Monday Night Club Anti-Bullying Policy

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our participating members so they can enjoy our activities in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable during any Monday Night Club event. If bullying does occur, all participants, including individual club members, care staff or parents, should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We believe that keeping quiet about bullying is NOT an option. All concerns should be reported to the Organiser, Helen Gill, or a member of the Board of Trustees. Bullying will not be tolerated.

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 belongings, threatening gestures)
- **Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Sexual:** unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Discrimination:** racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, homophobic comments, jokes about disabled people, sexist comments
- **Verbal:** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

Cyberbullying

This is when a person uses technology i.e. mobile phones or the internet (social networking sites, chat rooms, instant messenger, tweets), to deliberately upset someone. Bullies often feel anonymous and 'distanced' from the incident when it takes place online and 'bystanders' can easily become bullies themselves by forwarding the information on. There is a growing trend for bullying to occur online or via texts – bullies no longer rely on being physically near to the targeted victim.

Trolling

This is the name given to posting deliberately offensive comments on people's social media pages aimed at causing upset and distress. This type of behaviour could result in legal action.

Signs and Indicators

A young person or vulnerable adult may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. All volunteers, parents and carers should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a young person or vulnerable person:

- says he or she is being bullied

- is unwilling to go to club sessions
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- feels ill before club activities
- 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.

In more extreme cases:

- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other friends 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.

Recommended Action

If The Monday Night Club decides it is appropriate for us to deal with the situation we will 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/not appropriate a small panel (made up from Chair, Organiser, and one other trustee) should meet with the parent/carer and/or member alleging bullying to get details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.
3. The same panel should meet with the alleged bully and if appropriate parent/carer and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed.
4. If bullying has in their view 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.
5. In some cases the bully and/or parent/carer of the bully can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The Monday Night Club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
6. All volunteers involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

You may also wish to access any of the following websites designed to give advice and guidance to members and parents/carers who are faced with dealing with bullying:

Guidance for parents/carers **anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk**

stonewall.org.uk

bullying.co.uk

Our Commitment

The Monday Night Club commits to ensure our club is free from bullying in any form. This includes our website and social networking pages. Any online bullying will be dealt with swiftly and appropriately in line with procedures detailed in this policy.

Report concerns about bullying to the Organiser.

The Monday Night Club Organiser is Helen Gill.

Name:.....

Signed:.....

Date:.....