



## City of Portsmouth Athletic Club Anti-Bullying Policy

### Statement of Intent

Portsmouth Athletics Club is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our members. We believe that athletics should be an inclusive and supportive sport where everyone belongs and can flourish. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable within our club, whether in person or online. We expect all volunteers, staff, athletes, and members to work together to prevent and reduce bullying.

If bullying does occur, members should feel confident in speaking up, knowing that incidents will be addressed promptly and effectively. Any member who witnesses or experiences bullying is encouraged to report it to the Club Welfare Officer, a committee member, a competition provider, or England Athletics.

### Definition of Bullying

Bullying is repeated behaviour intended to hurt someone physically or emotionally. It is often directed at individuals based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other characteristics. The perception of the victim is paramount in determining whether bullying has occurred.

#### Types of Bullying

- **Physical** – Hitting, slapping, pushing.
- **Verbal** – Name-calling, gossiping, threats.
- **Non-verbal** – Use of hand signs, exclusion, or sending offensive messages.
- **Emotional** – Intimidation, humiliation, undermining, spreading rumours.
- **Cyberbullying** – Intimidation or harassment through social media, text messages, emails, or online forums.
- **Hate crimes** – Racial, sexual, transphobic, or homophobic bullying, or bullying someone because of a disability.

### Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is a particularly harmful form of bullying that can take place in private or public online settings. It can include:

- Posting negative comments or spreading rumours on social media.
- Sending threatening or offensive messages via text or email.
- Sharing personal contact details of a victim without consent.
- Impersonating someone online to post false or damaging information.

### Procedures for Dealing with Bullying

- **Reporting Incidents** – Any member experiencing or witnessing bullying should report it to the Club Welfare Officer or a committee member.
- **Investigation** – The club will investigate all reports of bullying, ensuring confidentiality and fairness.
- **Parental Involvement** – Where bullying involves children, parents/carers may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the issue.
- **External Involvement** – In serious cases, UK Athletics Safeguarding Team, England Athletics, or the police may be consulted.



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- **Addressing the Behaviour** – The club will take appropriate steps to stop the bullying and support all parties involved.
- **Disciplinary Action** – If bullying continues despite intervention, disciplinary measures, including suspension or expulsion, may be enforced.

## Specific Procedures

### Child-to-Child Bullying

- Facilitate reconciliation where possible.
- Meet separately with the victim and alleged bully to gather information.
- If bullying has occurred, issue a formal warning and outline further actions if behaviour continues.
- Monitor the situation to prevent recurrence.

### Adult-to-Child Bullying

- Treated as a safeguarding issue and reported to UK Athletics for guidance.
- Investigated as a breach of the club's Code of Conduct.
- May involve external agencies such as the police or social care.

### Adult-to-Adult Bullying

- Treated as an internal misconduct issue.
- A written complaint should be submitted to the Club Secretary.
- Mediation may be attempted before disciplinary action is considered.
- If unresolved, the case may be referred to England Athletics or the police.

## Prevention Measures

- All members must sign and adhere to the club's **Code of Conduct** upon joining.
- The **Club Welfare Officer** will raise awareness about bullying through club meetings and education initiatives.
- The club will actively monitor and promote a respectful culture to prevent bullying.

## Related Policies

- [Club Constitution](#)
- [Safeguarding and welfare](#)
- [Codes of Conduct](#)
- [Club Grievance and Disciplinary Policy](#)
- [Club Inclusion Policy](#)
- [Club Social Media Policy](#)



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## Key Contacts

- Club Welfare Officer: Paul Smith OBE / Rhiannon Navesey  
[welfare@portsmouthathletic.co.uk](mailto:welfare@portsmouthathletic.co.uk)
- England Athletics Welfare Team: [welfare@englandathletics.org](mailto:welfare@englandathletics.org)
- UK Athletics Safeguarding Team: [safeguarding@uka.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@uka.org.uk) / 07920 532552
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- Childline: 0800 1111 / [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: [www.antibullyingalliance.org](http://www.antibullyingalliance.org)

Portsmouth Athletics Club takes bullying seriously and is committed to ensuring a safe and positive environment for all members. Any concerns should be reported immediately to ensure swift action is taken.

Unleash Your Inner Athlete.

Next Review Date: March 2026