

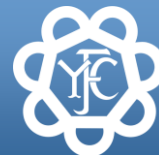
# **Anti Bullying Policy and Guidelines**

P&G 026

Adopted October 2016

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## Statement of intent

The National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members, elected officers (club/county/area/national), club leaders, volunteer helpers, staff, parents and the wider YFC community so they can participate in YFC activities in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. **Bullying of any kind is unacceptable throughout the Federation.** If bullying does occur, people within YFC should be able to speak up and know that incidents will be investigated and addressed promptly and effectively.

- All members, elected officers (club/county/area/national) , club leaders, volunteer helpers, staff, parents and the wider YFC community should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All members, elected officers (club/county/area/national), club leaders, volunteer helpers, staff , parents and the wider YFC community should be aware of the NFYFC policy on bullying, and be able refer to it when bullying arises and is reported.
- As a Federation, we take bullying seriously. Members, elected officers (club/county/area/national), club leaders, volunteer helpers, staff, parents and the wider YFC community should be encouraged to report bullying behaviour and assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying behaviour and observation of bullying without action is unacceptable. Young Farmers regards bullying as a safeguarding issue and will always take action if they observe or are informed that a child is at risk as a result of bullying.

## What is bullying?

*The Anti Bullying Alliance defines bullying as the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace.*

Bullying can take many forms, it can be:

- **Emotional** being deliberately cold and unfriendly towards others, actively excluding others, tormenting, peer pressure (e.g. hiding property, unwanted text messages, threatening gestures)
- **Verbal** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, banter that is hurtful or discriminatory
- **Physical** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Sexual** unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Material** when possessions are stolen or damaged or extortion takes place
- **Prejudice based** When the bullying behaviour is related to a prejudice towards a protected characteristic. Under the law this includes gender, sexuality, race, religion, disability and age.

The majority of the above mentioned types of bullying can all also take place online which is also referred to as cyberbullying.

*Cyber bullying refers to bullying behaviour online or through phones, gadgets and electronic equipment. The most common forms of cyber bullying includes sending or posting abusive comments about another person or group, blackmailing people to send personal details or images, uploading and sharing hurtful images or videos, deliberately excluding others from online social groups, impersonating others online with the intent to cause hurt or embarrassment, targeting vulnerable individuals and groups with abusive comments and abusing others through gaming sites.*

*We have created a separate resource to support you if you have concerns about cyberbullying (see Appendix 6)*

Bullying is not the same thing as a disagreement between two people. Bullying is:

- Usually systematic and repeated, though one-off events can turn into bullying behaviour (i.e. receiving hurtful pictures is not an act of bullying behaviour but sharing them with others knowing they have the potential to cause harm could be).
- Intended to cause harm.
- Done by a person or people who perceive themselves as more powerful than the person/people they bully rather than between equals.
- Distressing and hurtful to the victim rather than gentle teasing between friends (this should be closely observed as teasing or 'banter' can often evolve into bullying within a peer group when people hide their feelings because they don't want to lose face).
- Usually one way rather than an exchange – though sometimes people may lash out in response to bullying behaviour

## **Who can be bullied?**

Anyone can be bullied by anyone else – *members, elected officers (club/county/area/national), club leaders, volunteer helpers, staff, parents and members of the wider YFC community* can be bullied by *members, elected officers (club/county/area/national), club leaders, volunteer helpers, staff, parents and the members of the wider YFC community*.

## **Why is it important to respond to bullying?**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying and young people can feel powerless to stop it. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Members who are bullying need to be challenged and supported to learn different ways of behaving. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

## **Procedures for dealing with bullying**

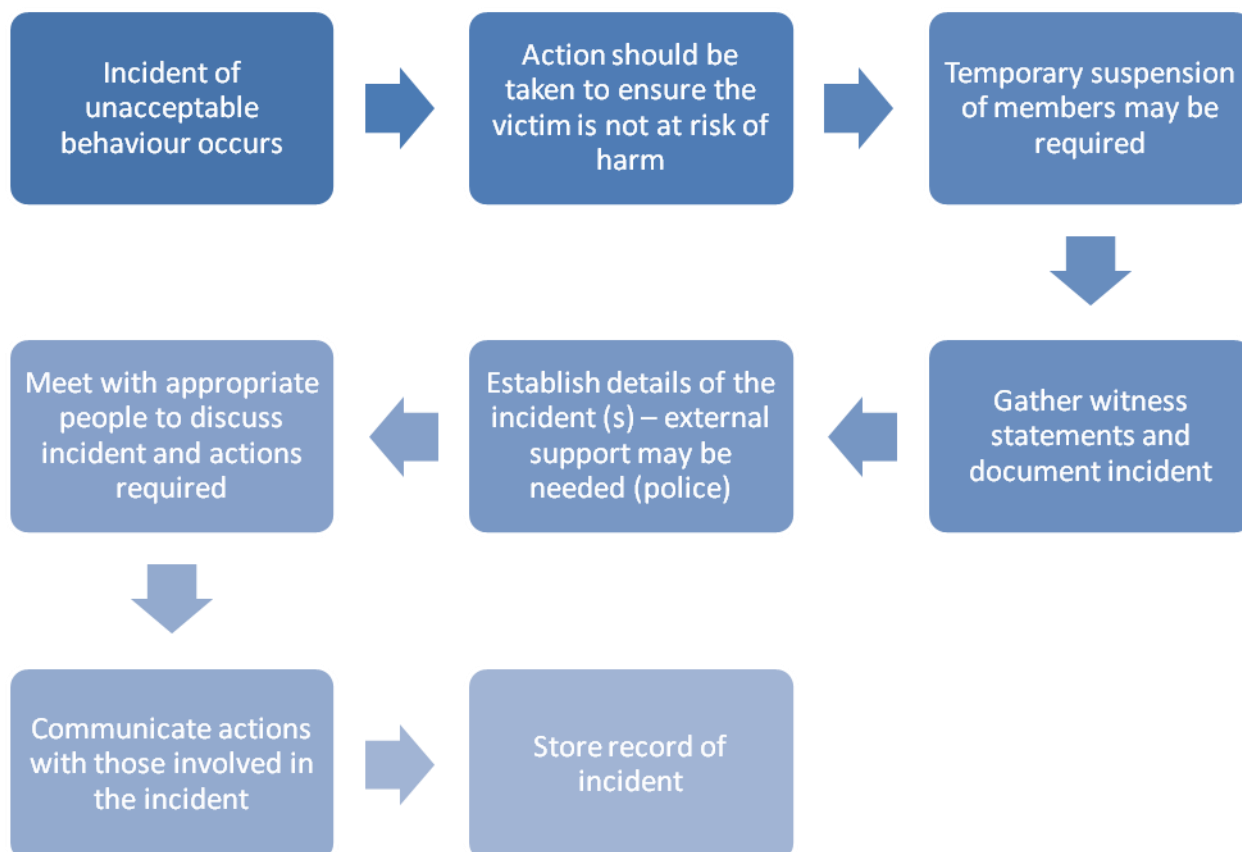
Bullying behaviour should be responded to in the first instance by:

- Listening to the victim (s)
- Reassuring the victim (s)

- Continuing to offer help, advice and support to the victim (s)

*(If you are concerned that the bullying incident may have reached the need for a formal safeguarding response please refer to your safeguarding policy, contact your county office or NFYFC for support with the issue.)*

## Addressing Bullying Behaviour Incidents Flowchart



All allegations of bullying should be investigated. In responding to incidents of bullying, those in a position of responsibility should take action when bullying is reported in the following ways:

- Immediate action must be taken to stop the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying. In taking action, care should be taken in order not to make the situation worse. *(Those addressing the concern must also exercise care and not jump to conclusions. It is not inconceivable that the person doing the reporting is involved in the bullying and that the accusations are being made with malicious intent, also jumping in too soon without thinking it through may increase the bullying.)*
- Ensure that the person who is bullied is supported and is not at risk of immediate harm. If an individual (s) is harmed or facing immediate danger parents (where a child or young person is involved) or external authorities (social care or the police) should be contacted by those addressing the situation.
- Establish information from those involved and other witnesses whether the bullying is part of a pattern or an isolated incident. Ask for any supporting evidence – for example in the case of

cyberbullying the content might still be online or the victim/ witnesses might have made screen grabs. In considering the actions you need to take ensure the matter is dealt with calmly, involving only those that need to be informed, whilst maintaining confidentiality wherever possible.

- As soon as possible a written account of the bullying incident should be documented by the people addressing the situation. This should include date and time, those involved, information on the situation, planned actions and any available evidence. Where external organisations are contacted this should also be logged. Appendix 3 can be used as a template to log this.
- Contact your local County Federation or NFYFC and inform them of the situation and access information, advice and support if necessary.
- Inform parents if appropriate. If the incident involves member(s) under 18 years of age then the parents should be informed of the situation in order to offer additional support in addressing the situation.
- If necessary and appropriate, during the exploration of a situation external authorities (social care or education welfare officer) or the police will be consulted if anybody has been harmed or is at risk of harm. This should be done by those addressing the concern. Your county office or NFYFC can support you to refer information.

#### **If the issue remains internal -**

- Arrange a meeting with those involved in the situation to gather information, these may need to be separate occasions for the victim(s) and those displaying bullying behaviour to avoid potential conflict. During these meetings, along with gathering information it should be made clear to all that bullying behaviour is not acceptable. Where possible encourage the person doing the bullying behaviour to see the victim's point of view and identify the reason for the bullying.
- Any damage caused by the person exhibiting bullying behaviour should be addressed and they should take responsibility for their actions. *For example they may be asked to apologise for hurtful behaviours.*
- Following the gathering of information, those involved in addressing the concern may need to explain why a sanction (if any) is given to member(s) involved, this could include exclusions from particular events or activities. This should be documented and letters sent to individuals where appropriate. In some cases parents will need to be informed of the decision of those involved regarding issues that affect their child (ren).
- If possible, the people involved may be able to be reconciled following informal mediation. In serious cases this may require the support of external agencies - this is known as restorative work.
- Be aware that bullying can have a serious short and long term impact on emotional wellbeing and mental health. If you have concerns that a person is experiencing depression or anxiety as a result of bullying it is important that they see their GP or access counselling services. If you have serious concerns about their personal health and safety (e.g concerns about self harm and suicidal thoughts) follow safeguarding procedures.
- Following an issue, time may need to be invested in the group to ensure further incidents do not occur. In order to provide informal education to the members the club activity programme could include an anti bullying workshop to encourage group discussions. If the bullying is prejudice related (e.g homophobic or sexist) you might also want to consider the wider culture of the group and whether you need to address general attitudes, use of language, etc.
- A group agreement is often a successful way of moving forward from an incident as it establishes a guide for future behaviour that members take ownership of.

- After the incident(s) have been investigated and resolved, the issues should be monitored to ensure a repeat of the situation does not take place.

If incidents of poor conduct continue to occur members may need to be dealt with in accordance with the Standards of Behaviour policy which can be obtained upon request from your county federation.

If an anonymous allegation is received by the club, county or NFYFC we will investigate as thoroughly as possible but we will not be able to report back to the complainant regarding the action taken.

## Useful Contacts and Resources

**Anti Bullying Alliance** [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

**Bullying UK** [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

**ChildLine** [www.childline.org.uk/explore/bullying/pages/bullying.aspx](http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/bullying/pages/bullying.aspx)

**Diana Award** [www.diana-award.org.uk/](http://www.diana-award.org.uk/)

**Ditch the Label** [www.ditchthelabel.org/](http://www.ditchthelabel.org/)

**Kidscape** [www.kidscape.org.uk/](http://www.kidscape.org.uk/)

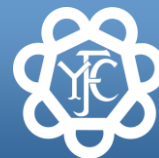
**Mind** [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

**YoungMinds** <http://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

**Support for adults experiencing bullying** - [www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk/AdultBullying.html](http://www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk/AdultBullying.html)

**National Bullying Helpline – for anyone being bullied** - [www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk](http://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk)

**Workplace Bullying-** [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)




## Bullying Incident Recording Form – Appendix 1

This form can be used to record disclosures, allegations and observations of bullying behaviours within YFC. It should be retained within confidential club records in line safeguarding recordings.

<b>Club Officer's/Interviewer's details</b>	
Name:	
Position:	
<b>Member's details</b>	
Name:	Date of birth:
Address:	
Parents/guardian names:	
Contact details:	

Record what was said and reported (use additional paper, as required)





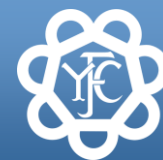
Action taken:

<b>Reported to County Federation and /or NFYFC</b>	
Name:	Date & Time:
Details of action taken, follow-up and ongoing support:	

<b>Reported to external organisation –e.g. Anti Bullying organisation</b>	
Organisation:	
Person advice received from:	
Date & Time:	
Details of advice received:	

<b>Reported to Police/Social Care team</b>	
Name:	Date & Time
Position:	
Details of advice received:	

Signed by interviewer, as above.....Date: .....

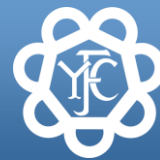


## **Appendix 2 - Signs and Symptoms bullying could be occurring**

A person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Those in positions of responsibility should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate the concern if an individual:

- Changes in their usual behaviours i.e. goes from being enthusiastic and confident to withdrawn
- Appears fearful or hesitant to participate in activities
- May request to be accompanied to or from the YFC activities when this has not previously been a concern
- Doesn't want to go to YFC activities when a particular person or group of people are present
- Changes their usual routine – travel to YFC activities, members they interact with etc...
- Becomes anxious or lacking in confidence
- Feels ill suddenly at during YFC activities
- Has possessions go "missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money or has monies repeatedly "lost"
- Seems to be preoccupied with checking their phone and seems distressed after use
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Is exhibiting bullying behaviour towards other people
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises – this could indicate self harming
- Is using or abusing drugs and alcohol
- Running away or attempting or threatening suicide
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above behaviours

This list is not exhaustive and these signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated and recorded.



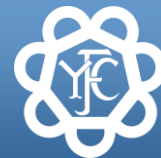
### Appendix 3 - Guidelines for supporting individuals who have experienced bullying behaviour

- Discuss the situation with members of the officer team or those addressing the concern; seek advice from the county office or NFYFC if necessary.
- Speak to the member (s) involved but avoid intensive questioning of the victim(s) as this may lead to further loss of self-confidence and if a crime has been committed, may contaminate the evidence. Find out where the bullying is taking place, if it is within YFC, or if YFC members are involved we have a duty to respond (remember a lot of bullying takes place online or through mobile phones and this can at any time of the day or night). If the bullying is taking place at school or college they should have their own anti-bullying policy and support services in place to help.
- Make sure the person who is bullied is supported and kept safe. This may mean removing them from the club/county/position temporarily while the issue is addressed. This should be discussed with parents if the member is under 18. Reassure the victim that there is to be a determined effort to stop the bullying. (You cannot promise them that the bullying will stop immediately)
- Try to find out information about the situation by discussion with other people in the club/county.
- If a person has been harmed as a result of bullying external organisations may need to be contacted such as the police or social care.
- Depending on the circumstances, supervision of groups may need to be tightened or reviewed.

#### Strategies for creating safe YFC activities

- Run an anti bullying workshop with the group to raise awareness amongst the members. Contact your local youth service anti bullying team for support and resources, your county or NFYFC can support you to do so.
- Ensure that negative attitudes and behaviors are challenged and people within YFC behave in an appropriate way towards one another.
- During your club programming involving some confidence building exercises or learning of new skills, think of ways to bring the group together, team building and group challenges can be a useful tool.
- Ensure there is access to people within YFC and the wider community with whom those affected by bullying behaviors can highlight this and their discuss concerns.
- Ensure that those within YFC feel confident that when they ask for help it will be taken seriously.

*Remember that bullying does not only happen to those attending young farmers clubs as members, elected officers (club/county/area/national), club leaders, volunteer helpers, staff, parents and members of the wider YFC community. All can be victims of bullying and also be bullies themselves – all levels of the organisation should know where they can go if they have a concern. If you witness bullying behaviour within YFC you should tell someone.*



## **Appendix 4- Bullying prevention strategies**

In YFC we want to create an inclusive environment for all, a community where people feel safe and protected. To support this clubs, counties, area and national activities should -

- Promote an ethos, which ensures respect for each individual member
- Make sure all members feel confident to challenge offensive or disrespectful language, attitudes or actions.
- Encourage open discussions about bullying and ensure that every level knows where they can go to talk to someone about bullying or raise a concern
- Make people aware of the negative impact of bullying
- Develop a culture where anyone that has concerns about bullying behaviour can freely ask for help without fear of being ignored, ridiculed or ostracised.
- Promote the understanding that vigilance by all involved in YFC is an important defence against bullying
- Take effective action and sanctions against bullying behaviour
- Learn from incidents – what additional work might you need to do with members to challenge bullying behaviour
- Run annual sessions on bullying, its effects and how to deal with it and prevent it – this could be done in Anti Bullying week which takes place in November each year
- Contact the Anti Bullying Alliance to access anti bullying training. Your county office or NFYFC can support you with this.

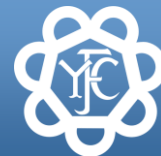
## **Bullying or Safeguarding?**

Safeguarding is an umbrella term to protect the wellbeing of children. All bullying incidents are matters of child protection, but not all are serious enough to trigger the implementation of the safeguarding policy. You will need to use your judgement or seek advice from your county or NFYFC as to whether a bullying incident puts the member at risk of specific harm and therefore triggers a formal safeguarding response.

Situations which always require implementation of the safeguarding policy –

- If a member has been threatened with physical harm
- If a member reports they have been physically hurt
- If a member reports they have been assaulted sexually or are at risk of sexual harm.

In these situations a crime may also have been committed and so you may need to be particularly cautious to handle the situation with sensitivity, without asking leading questions. Take down the facts as they are presented to you and contact your county office or NFYFC for further support.



## **Appendix 5 - Strategies for Working with those displaying bullying behavior**

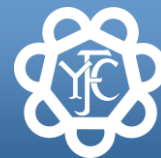
The immediate response must be to attempt to stop the bullying, to ensure the protection of the physical, social and psychological wellbeing of those bullying and those observing the behaviour. YFC is an inclusive environment and if possible we should take action to support all parties involved in situations. If the person is not genuinely committed to changing their behaviour, the most appropriate response is:

- Outline steps to be taken, if the person continues to behave inappropriately they may need to be removed from the organisation for a period of time to safeguard the welfare of others. Contact and discuss this with parents if the member is under the age of 18.
- Try to support the person in changing his/her behaviour. Provide an opportunity for them to talk freely about the behaviour and potential reasons for it.
- Make it clear that the behaviour is unacceptable to everyone involved in YFC and that all concerns will be addressed.

### **Strategies for supporting those displaying bullying behaviours**

- Explore the possibility of the bullying behaviour being a compensatory activity, for example, lack of friends, no outside interests etc. other issues may be happening in the member's life that they are finding it difficult to cope with or express. It may also be in retaliation for something that has happened in the past.
- Try to help the person displaying bullying behaviors to develop acceptable behaviour to in order to participate in YFC as an active member. The member may need to be signposted to support for dealing with anger, frustration, handling aggressive feelings, channeling energy in worthwhile ways, resolving conflict and having empathy with others.
- If appropriate, set up a confidential environment, where those involved can talk freely about any feelings they may have in the presence of supportive members/officers/staff or wider YFC community.
- Ask the parents for help in addressing the problem (if person involved is under the age of 18).
- Contact external organisations for support if necessary.
- Focus on any positive behaviours of the member displaying bullying behaviours.
- Use programme opportunities to counteract prejudices, encourage group work, members supporting one another and confidence building activities.
- Work with the group to avoid labelling of members, promote a culture of support and encouragement.
- Any damage caused by the bully must be redressed as soon as possible and the person displaying bullying behaviors should be encouraged to take responsibility for their actions.
- Natural sub-groups of members will form within clubs and this is to be expected but officers should be aware if these groups become cliques and isolate or intimidate others and take

appropriate action to unite the group and counteract behaviors that could develop into bullying behaviours.



## Appendix 6 - Advice about cyberbullying

*Cyber bullying refers to bullying behaviour online or through phones, gadgets and electronic equipment.*

*The most common forms of cyber bullying behaviour includes sending or posting abusive comments about another person or group, blackmailing people to send personal details or images, uploading and sharing hurtful images or videos, deliberately excluding others from online social groups, impersonating others online with the intent to cause hurt or embarrassment, targeting vulnerable individuals and groups with abusive comments and abusing others through gaming sites*

### **Top tips if you experience cyberbullying**

**Be Share Aware.** If you feel uncomfortable with anything someone is asking you to do, **do NOT do it** such as taking a photo or video of yourself or sharing information, photos etc on others - anything posted or sent online is **totally out of your control once sent.**

**Don't retaliate.** Tempting as it can be to post or share something back this just extends the conflict and makes it harder to see who was in the wrong.

**Save evidence.** Content can be quickly taken down so screen grab the evidence. If you don't know how to do this ask a friend for help.

**Careful approach** If you know the person and they are another member or a friend you might feel confident enough to ask them to remove the content. Explain why you find it offensive. People sometimes don't think before they share content online so it might be that the person didn't mean to hurt your feelings or cause offence.

**Block.** If you don't know the person, or there is clear intention to cause you harm then consider blocking the person so they can't further attack from that account.

**Report.** Consider reporting to the platform provider. Reporting routes, response times and breaches of conduct are different for each social network provider. If you can't find where to report, ask a friend for help.

**Ask your friends for support.** It can be helpful if other people gently come to your defence – they shouldn't engage in an argument or retaliate but a few comments saying why they love you can make a big difference to how you feel!

**Contact the police.** If the cyberbully has threatened you with harm, subjected you to a racist, homophobic, transphobic or sexist attack or encouraged you to harm yourself contact the police. If you feel at immediate risk of harm dial 999

**Take some time out.** If the cyberbullying is through a particular social network, site, app or game, a few hours or days away from it might help restore you to a place of calm. Spend time with friends and

family that make you feel good about yourself – or visit other networks, sites, apps or games where the bullying isn't happening. Cyberbullies are looking for a response so the less you give back, the less they have to work with.

**Increase your defences.** It's a good idea to take a look at your friends and followers and if it makes you feel safer, reduce these to people you know and trust. Check your privacy settings and see whether there are things you can do to make yourself harder to find or to hide some of your content (e.g. private account on Instagram, posts only visible to Friends on Facebook). If you are not sure how to do this ask a friend or family member for help.

**Don't be afraid to ask for help.** Experiencing any form of bullying is horrible. Don't keep it to yourself – reach out to friends and family for help. If you need to talk to someone in confidence you can always call ChildLine or access their online service. If the bullying has made you feel anxious or depressed, see your GP.

**Oops – what if I posted something that has caused offence.** It's easily done. If possible remove the content and let the person know you're sorry.

**Keep cool online.** If you're angry with someone – try and keep it off social networks. It's always better to talk things through face to face, or over the phone rather than having a go in front of an audience of hundreds/ thousands/ millions.





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