



# BULLYING POLICY

## PURPOSE

Yarraville Seddon Eagles Football Club are committed to providing a safe and respectful club environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Explain the definition of bullying
- Make clear that all forms of bullying at Yarraville Seddon Eagles will not be tolerated
- Ask that everyone in our club be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and accept responsibility to report bullying behaviour to club staff
- Ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- Ensure that support is provided to players who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including victims, bystanders and perpetrators)
- Seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Yarraville Seddon Eagles

When responding to bullying behaviour, Yarraville Seddon Eagles aims to:

- Be proportionate, consistent and responsive
- Find a constructive and positive solution for everyone
- Stop the bullying from happening again
- Restore the relationships between the players involved.

## SCOPE

This policy addresses how Yarraville Seddon Eagles aims to prevent and respond to player bullying behaviour. YSE recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate player behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our club.

## POLICY

### Definitions

Bullying occurs when someone, or a group of people, deliberately and repeatedly upset, harass, intimidate, threaten or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying, where the bully or bullies have more power than the victim due to their age, size, status or other reasons. Bullying may be direct or indirect, physical or verbal, and includes cyberbullying. Bullying is not a one-off disagreement between two or more people or a situation of mutual dislike. In this policy any reference to 'bullying' includes all forms of bullying including cyberbullying.

Bullying can be:

1. Direct physical bullying – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. Direct verbal bullying – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. Indirect bullying – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

Harassment can also constitute bullying if it amounts to a pattern of behaviour or course of conduct towards another person that is demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. Cyberbullying is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile phone, tablets, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal, written or include use of images, video and/or audio.

### Other distressing behaviours

Many distressing behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Players who are involved in or who witness any distressing behaviours should report their concerns to their parents or coach. Mutual conflict involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power.

In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Single-episode acts of harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion, they are not being bullied.

Harassment, nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our club.

## BULLYING PREVENTION

Yarraville Seddon Eagles have a number of strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive club culture. We strive to foster a culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at YSE is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole club, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying. At our club:

- We have a positive environment that provides safety, security and support for players and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing.
- We seek to empower players to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- Players are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to coaches and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.
- All adults act as role models and demonstrate positive behaviour and relationships.

## INCIDENT RESPONSE

### Reporting concerns to Yarraville Seddon Eagles

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our club.

Players who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or players who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to an adult as soon as possible.

Parents or carers who may develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at YSE should contact Emma Vasilevski on 0423 082 477

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by players and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by YSE are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

### Investigations

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, we will:

- Speak to the players involved in the allegations, including the victim/s, the alleged perpetrator/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- Speak to the parents of the players involved
- Take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- Obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the players involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform YSE about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: Brodie's Law.

### Responses to bullying behaviours

When YSE have sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the players involved, we may apply:

- Club enforced suspensions
- Withdrawal of player membership for our club

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting players who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- Bully Stoppers
- Kids Helpline
- Lifeline
- Bullying. No way!