



Stafford and Stone Canoe Club (SSCC) Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of Intent SSCC is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our members so they can participate in our sport in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. **Bullying of any kind is unacceptable.** If bullying does occur, all paddlers or parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. **Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the club welfare officer or any committee member.**

If bullying does occur, all paddlers or parents should tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Please contact our safeguarding and welfare team Pete Willett welfare@staffordandstonecc.co.uk and/or Claire Perkin at claireperkin@staffordandstonecc.co.uk.

The Club Welfare Officer(s), coaches, committee and parents can help raise awareness of bullying within the Club. If issues of bullying arise then the welfare and safeguarding team will consider meeting with the paddlers to discuss the issue openly and constructively.

Objectives of this Policy:

- All committee members, coaches, volunteers, and parents should understand what bullying is.
- All committee members, coaches, volunteers should know what the SSCC policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All junior paddlers and parents should know what the club/ centre policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As an organisation SSCC take bullying seriously. Junior paddlers and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

- **Bullying will not be tolerated.**

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying? Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect.

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 include:

- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence and theft
- Verbal: name-calling, constant teasing, sarcasm, racial or homophobic taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Emotional: tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring
- Cyber: All areas of the internet, such as email, social media and internet chat room misuse. Mobile phone threats by text message, calls, photos and video.

Signs and Symptoms of children being bullied A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- 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 possessions damaged or missing
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- is bullying other children or siblings
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone In more extreme cases
- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- stops eating
- runs away or attempts or threatens suicide

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

Procedures:

1. Report bullying incidents to your Club Welfare Officer(s) or a member of the committee.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents should be referred to British Canoeing for advice or contact one of the organisations listed below.
3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in for a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

Recommended Action SSCC will follow the steps outlined below in case of a reported bullying concern:

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails or is not appropriate, a panel should meet with the club member or parents/carers and child alleging bullying to obtain exact details of the allegation. The panel might comprise the Club Chair, the Club Welfare Officer (CWO) and one other committee member or suitable committee member. Minutes should be taken for clarity; these must be agreed and signed as a true account.
3. The same panel should meet with the alleged bully and if required their parents/carers to put the allegation to them. They will be asked to answer and give their account of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity; these must be agreed and signed as a true account.
4. If bullying has, in the panel's view, taken place the person should be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension should the bullying continue. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.

5. In some cases the parent/ carer of the bully or victim of bullying can be asked to be present at the Club with the young person each time they attend, if appropriate.
6. The Club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not continuing.
7. All coaches/ instructors and volunteers involved with both parties should be made aware of the concerns and sanctions.

In the case of adults alleged to be bullying:

- The Safeguarding and Welfare team will follow British Canoeing Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures.
- British Canoeing can be informed and will provide advice on action to be taken.

Prevention:

- SSCC will abide by its code of conduct for all members and this anti bullying policy.
- All members on joining and renewing must accept the clubs Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct upon joining/renewing with the club.
- The Safeguarding and Welfare team will review, update, and communicate to the committee on all relevant club policies, procedures and working practice related to safeguarding and welfare.

Some useful HELP ORGANISATIONS:

KIDSCAPE Anti-Bullying Helpline for Parents 0845 1205 204

Family Lives 0808 800 2222

NSPCC 24-hour help line 0808 800 5000

This SSCC policy was last updated 12/09/2024

(to be reviewed yearly, or before in line with British Canoeing)

Next update due Sept 2025