



Anti-Bullying Statement

Review Cycle

Review Cycle	Review Date	Reviewer	Status-Action Needed
	5/7/23	C Ewing	

Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying can occur between an adult and young person, young person to young person and adult to adult. Bullying is not acceptable within Dressage Ireland. The competitive nature of sport can create an environment that provides opportunities for bullying. The bully may be a parent who pushes too hard, a coach who adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy, a young player who intimidates another or an official who places unfair pressure on a person.

Bullying can only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in which it is not safe to do so. The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress, to the extent it affects health and development, or at the extreme, causes significant harm. There are a number of signs that may indicate a person is being bullied:

- Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in activities
- Physical signs (unexplained bruises, scratches, or damage to belongings)
- Stress-caused illness – headaches, and stomach aches which seem unexplained
- Fearful behaviour (fear of attending competitions or training events etc.)
- Frequent loss of, or shortage of, money with vague explanations
- Having few friends or drop out of newer members
- Changes in behaviour (withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, upset, distressed, not eating, reduced concentration, drop in performance)
- Anxiety (shown by nail-biting, fearfulness, tics)

This list is not exhaustive and there are other possible reasons for many of the above. The presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that bullying is actually taking place.

HOW CAN IT BE PREVENTED?

- Ensure that all members follow the Sport Ireland Code of Ethics and Dressage Ireland Code of Conduct, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member.
- Deal with any incidents as they arise.
- Use a whole group policy or 'no-blame approach', i.e., not 'bullying the bully' but working with bullies and the group of young people, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing, and so make the problem a 'shared concern' of the group.
- Reinforce that there is 'a permission to tell' culture rather than a 'might is right' · Encourage people to negotiate, co-operate and help others, particularly new or different members.
- Offer the victim immediate support and put the 'no blame approach' into operation
- Never tell a person to ignore bullying, they can't ignore it, it hurts too much
- Never encourage a person to beat the bully at their own game
- Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault

WHO SHOULD DEAL WITH BULLYING?

While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and if involving children or vulnerable adults must be reported to the statutory authorities, dealing with bullying behaviour is normally the responsibility of all leaders within Dressage Ireland. For further information on bullying and the 'no-blame' approach see websites, www.sportireland.ie and www.thecpsu.org.uk

Bullying is not acceptable.

Signed Chair of Dressage Ireland Clg

Date: