



Surrey Hockey

Bullying & 'Banter' Policy and Good Practice

1. Introduction

Everyone involved in hockey has the right to be treated with respect. Surrey County Hockey Association (SCHA) is committed to providing an environment free from bullying and harassment for players, coaches, officials, and volunteers.

2. England Hockey's Role

England Hockey (EH) supports clubs and associations by providing guidance, training, and resources to prevent and address bullying. EH treats all concerns seriously and may:

1. Refer issues to statutory agencies
2. Take action under its Safeguarding and Protecting Young People regulations
3. Direct clubs or associations to resolve matters internally, as appropriate

3. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is repeated behaviour intended to cause physical or emotional harm, often targeting individuals based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or other personal characteristics. It may occur between adults, young people, or both.

Forms of Bullying:

1. **Emotional:** Persistent unfriendliness, exclusion, intimidation
2. **Physical:** Hitting, kicking, pushing, or other violence
3. **Racist, Sexist, or Homophobic:** Derogatory comments, jokes, or slurs
4. **Sexual:** Unwanted sexual comments, touching, or propositions
5. **Verbal:** Name-calling, insults, gossip
6. **Non-verbal:** Offensive gestures, messages
7. **Indirect:** Rumours, manipulation, undermining

Cyberbullying

Bullying conducted via electronic media (computers, smartphones, tablets, gaming consoles, etc.), including harassment, identity concealment, and sharing sexual images or messages (sexting).

4. Signs of Bullying

Indicators may include:

1. Verbal reports of being bullied
2. Withdrawal, anxiety, loss of confidence



3. Avoidance of hockey or changes in routine
4. Damaged or missing belongings
5. Unexplained injuries, stammering, or nightmares
6. Aggression or bullying of others
7. Self-harm or threats to safety

These behaviours may indicate bullying but could also reflect other issues. All concerns should be investigated.

5. Banter vs Bullying

Banter is friendly teasing among individuals of equal power with no intent to harm. It becomes bullying when:

1. It is excessive, repetitive, or hurtful
2. There is a power imbalance (e.g., coach-player, teacher-student)

Types of Banter:

1. **Friendly:** Respectful, mutually understood boundaries
2. **Ignorant:** Crosses boundaries unintentionally; usually accompanied by apology
3. **Malicious:** Intended to humiliate or embarrass

Banter must never be used to excuse bullying.

6. Principles

1. All SCHA members must understand bullying and EH anti-bullying guidance
2. Bullying of any form is unacceptable
3. Incidents must be addressed promptly

7. Actions

Responding to Banter

1. Do not ignore potential issues or assume resilience
2. Ask the individual how they wish the situation to be addressed
3. Reassure and support, offering options to resolve the situation

Responding to Bullying

1. Address the behaviour directly with the individual displaying bullying
2. Promote understanding of the impact and consequences of their actions
3. Encourage positive relationships and empathy
4. Engage parents or guardians where appropriate (U18s)
5. Implement proportionate sanctions or corrective actions
6. Record all actions taken and review outcomes
7. Provide training or mentoring on respectful behaviour



8. Adults should model good conduct at all times

If internal measures fail, EH Ethics and Compliance Manager may intervene.