



St Senans GAA

Bullying policy

1. Introduction

Any form of bullying is prohibited by the club. Bullying is defined as repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or during employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work, but, as a once off, is not considered to be bullying. Bullying is distinct from conflicting views and interpersonal difficulties, which should be raised with the appropriate manager in order to have any grievances or difficulties resolved. Bullying can take the following forms:

- Physical Contact
- Verbal abuse
- Implied threats
- Jokes, offensive language, gossip, slander, offensive songs.
- Posters, photocopied cartoons, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags, bunting and emblems or non-cooperation or exclusion from social activities.
- Intrusion by pestering, spying and stalking
- Repeated impossible deadlines or impossible tasks.
- Repeated unreasonable assignments to duties, which are obviously unfavourable to one individual.
- Vandalism of personal property.

These examples are not exhaustive, and offences of a similar nature are also prohibited and will be dealt with appropriately.

2. Rights and Responsibilities

Everyone in the club has the responsibility to prevent harassment, sexual harassment or bullying and to report any instances that they are party or witness to. There is a responsibility on managers to ensure the prevention of incidents of harassment and to act should any incidents be brought to their attention. Anyone engaging in any improper behaviour or sexual harassment on club premises, or anywhere else while on club business, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Players or members who feel that they are being harassed in any way in the club are encouraged to approach their own immediate manager, or another manager. All complaints of harassment will be taken seriously and are to be held in strict confidence as far as is reasonably practicable and will be investigated promptly and in an impartial manner. Only if these instances are reported can the club act to correct the situation. Managers are also responsible for dealing with complaints in the first instance. If a complaint is made to a manager, he/she should be understanding and sympathetic. The complaint will be taken seriously and ideally recorded in writing. Confidentiality will be assured as far as is reasonably practicable. Support and advice will be offered to a Player, as appropriate. It is the responsibility of the manager to notify their manager or the Chairman of the complaint as soon as possible.



St Senans GAA

Any player/coach is free to make a complaint. He/she will not be victimised for making a complaint. However, if a complaint is found to be unwarranted or malicious, disciplinary action may be taken. The person who is alleged to have done the harassing or bullying has rights. He/she is entitled to representation, a fair and impartial hearing, and the right to challenge the claim. An allegation of harassment or bullying remains an allegation until an investigation is completed. Disciplinary action will be taken against a person if, after an investigation, the allegation is upheld. Penalties are in accordance with the normal disciplinary procedure set out by the company. Managers and Coaches are required to act if they suspect any form of harassment or bullying, even if no complaint has been made.

3. Complaints Procedure

All players and members have a right to make a complaint if they feel they have been harassed, sexually harassed or bullied. Anyone who believes that he/she has become subject to harassment directly or, who observes or has knowledge of harassment or bullying towards another Player or, group of Players, is advised to take the following steps immediately:

3.1 Stage 1 – Informal Procedure

The purpose of the informal procedure is to ensure that the majority of cases of this nature will be handled effectively and efficiently, in a confidential and sensitive manner, and at local level:

- If possible, a recipient of bullying, harassment or sexual harassment should approach the perpetrator(s) and ask him or her to stop.
- The Player should inform the individual(s) of the company's policy on sexual harassment and harassment or on anti-bullying and advise him/her that continuance of this behaviour will result in the Player making a formal complaint.
- The Player may approach their manager or another manager for support in approaching the perpetrator(s) or for advice if in doubt about whether the behaviour constitutes harassment, bullying or sexual harassment.

3.2 Stage 2 – Formal Procedure

If the informal complaint has failed or is inappropriate in the circumstances, the formal procedure should be used as follows:

- The Player should make a complaint to their manager or manager's manager, preferably in writing.
- When a manager receives a complaint, a copy must be forwarded to his/her manager or the Chairman.
- The alleged perpetrator(s) will be notified in writing of the details of the complaint.
- A person will be nominated by the club (may be internal or external) to examine the complaint and set up an investigation as necessary.

3.3 Stage 3 - Investigation

If the formal procedure does not resolve the issue the club may decide to invoke a formal investigation which would involve the following steps:

- An investigation will be carried out into the alleged offence by the nominated investigation team members



St Senans GAA

- Should the gravity of the complaint warrant it, the investigation may be conducted by an independent consultant
- The investigation will be conducted thoroughly, objectively, with sensitivity, confidentially and with due respect to the rights of all parties concerned
- All parties concerned will be interviewed including any witnesses and each party will be informed of their right to be represented by a trusted colleague
- Following the investigation, the Player and alleged perpetrator(s) will be provided with a written copy of the findings.

3.4 Outcome

Following the above, the club will implement the following course of action:

- Should the results of a thorough investigation of an alleged incident reveal that a Player or member has engaged in actions or conduct which constitute harassment or bullying, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including termination of the employment relationship, depending on the seriousness of the violation.
- The claimant will be notified in writing that a thorough investigation has been conducted and assured that appropriate corrective action has been taken.
- If the results of a thorough investigation of an alleged incident reveal that a Player has not engaged in actions or conduct constituting harassment or bullying the claimant and the alleged harasser will be immediately notified that a thorough investigation has been conducted and the results indicate that there are no grounds to substantiate the harassment or bullying allegation.

3.5 Retaliation

Retaliation of any kind against a Player for complaining or taking part in any investigation in the context of this policy, or any adverse action taken against a Player, because the Player has lodged a harassment complaint, or participated in the company's investigation of a complaint, will give rise to appropriate corrective action, up to and including dismissal.

3.6 False Accusations

Deliberately making false accusations, if proven, will result in the imposition of the appropriate disciplinary action to the complaining party.

4. Monitoring and Training

The club agrees to monitor the implementation of its Equal Opportunity and Dignity and Respect policies and provide training as necessary.

Colman O Flaherty
Club Chairman
St. Senans Bord Na nOg