



Oak Park Road, Carlow  
PH: (059) 91 43775  
eMail: [info@carlowltc.com](mailto:info@carlowltc.com)

## BULLYING

**Carlow Lawn Tennis Club** respects every members need for, and rights to, a safe and secure environment where they can enjoy their membership. To ensure this every member (Junior and Senior) should

- Have respect for every individual's feelings and views
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.

### Types of Bullying

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. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity but, as a once off is not considered to be bullying*

### Bullying includes

physical aggression, verbal bullying, intimidation, damage to property, isolation, the use of repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidatory nature by an individual or group, or any comment intended to degrade.

Examples of what may be considered bullying behaviour include but is not limited to:

- physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc
- name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation and the continual ignoring of individuals
- sectarian/racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- sexual comments and /or suggestions
- unwanted physical contact

The above is not an exhaustive list and bullying is not the reserve of children or young people. Bullying can occur at any age.

# Procedure

**Carlow Lawn Tennis Club adopts the below procedure in relation to the reporting and investigation of complaints regarding Bullying by any Member of the club.**

## **Informal Complaints Procedure (Adults Only)**

The informal complaints procedure is an option and can be used in a situation where an offensive incident has occurred and the Member feels that they can approach the alleged perpetrator directly and request them to stop. The Member should make it clear that the behaviour is unwelcome, that it offends them or makes them uncomfortable and that it interferes with their enjoyment of their membership.

## **Information Complaints Procedure (Children Only)**

It is not advisable for one child or young person to approach another as above. In the first instance the child or young person should bring the complaint informally to either the supervisor or the appropriate appointed adult. They should state that they wish the adult to talk informally to the alleged offender and must outline the behaviour that they find offensive

## **Formal Complaints Procedure**

The formal complaint procedure may be made in the following circumstances:

1. the Member making the complaint wishes it to be treated formally or,
2. the alleged sexual harassment, harassment or bullying is too serious to be treated under the informal procedure or,
3. informal attempts at resolution have been unsatisfactory or,
4. the sexual harassment, harassment or bullying continues after the informal procedure has been exhausted

## **Submission of Complaint**

- The initial complaint should be made in writing to the appropriate sports captain. If the sports captain is involved in the incident the complaint should be made to the assistant captain or designated person on the relevant committee. This complaint should specify clearly the incident(s) that occurred, names of any witnesses and all other relevant information.
- A copy of the complaint should be marked confidential and given to the relevant Executive Committee Member (President, Chairperson or Secretary). This should state that a copy has been given to the immediate supervisor and the name of the person giving over the complaint should be recorded.
- The <President, Chairperson or Secretary> submit the complaint to the chairman who will review the submission and deem whether a formal investigation should take place.
- Should a formal investigation be required, the Chairman will appoint up to two independent investigators to investigate the complaint.
- Where it is deemed a formal investigation is not warranted, the Chairman will meet with the complainant to discuss this decision.

### **Investigation.**

Carlow Lawn Tennis Club adopts a no-blame policy where a formal investigation is deemed warranted. (i.e. it is assumed that the incident is a misunderstanding between the parties until the investigation demonstrates otherwise). The process for investigation is contained in the "Carlow LTC Investigations Instructions for investigators" which will be supplied to the appointed independent investigators at the time.

### **Presentation of Findings**

- When the investigation has been completed, the investigators will summarise the facts of the case and the findings in the form of a written report.
- The investigator(s) will hold separate meetings with the complainant and the alleged perpetrator during which one of the investigators will read this report. The member support may also attend this meeting.
- Neither party may introduce further evidence during this meeting to support their case.
- A copy of this report will be given to the complainant and the alleged perpetrator following the meetings.
- A copy of this report will be given to the Chairman.
- Where the complaint is upheld, no further action will be taken until two days have elapsed during which time the perpetrator can lodge an appeal to the outcome of the investigation. See Appendix 1 for procedure.
- Where the complaint is not upheld, the complainant has two working days to lodge an appeal to the outcome of the investigation.
- Where no appeal is lodged, the investigators and the Chairman will meet to discuss the findings and determine appropriate course of action.

### **Communication of Action to be taken**

- Where the complaint is upheld, the Chairman will arrange a meeting with the perpetrator to communicate the action to be taken as a result of the findings of the investigation.
- The perpetrator will have the right to appeal. Details of who to address the appeal to will be provided by the Chairman.

### **Follow Up Actions**

- The complainant will be formally advised by Human Resources whether action has been taken against the perpetrator, however, they will not divulge the level of action that has been taken.

### **NOTE:**

If, following investigation, a complaint is found to be untrue and reckless or malicious, Corrective Actions will be invoked against any person who may be found to have been untruthful or acting in a reckless or malicious way or to have knowingly or recklessly abused the club policy in relation to sexual harassment, bullying or harassment.

## **Appeals Procedure**

A member may appeal against the outcome of an investigation and must do so within 2 days of the outcome meeting. The appeal submission must be in writing to the Chairman.

There must be substantial grounds for lodging an appeal i.e.

- Procedure was not followed
- Information which was provided during the investigation was not taken into account in the written findings of the investigation
- New information that was materially relevant to the outcome came to light after the decision was made

The Member must clearly state under which of the above they wish to make the appeal and must provide full details of the appeal being made.

The Chairman will review all of the investigation notes, witness statements, minutes of formal meetings, the written summary of the investigation findings and the appeal documentation before deciding whether there is merit to the appeal.

If there is merit to an appeal, as decided by the Chairman, a meeting will be held within five working days. The appeal will be held by two different but senior members. After a full review of the appeal under the grounds above, a decision will be made and communicated to the Chairman.

If there is no merit to an appeal as decided by the Chairman, the Chairman should communicate their decision to the Member.

## **Our Bullying Policy with regard to Children and Young Adults**

**Carlow Lawn Tennis Club** is a club where we want children to feel safe and protected, recognised for their achievements and never undermined on any ground.

To this end bullying of any kind will not be accepted or condoned and in particular where children or young adults are involved. All forms of bullying will be addressed through the appropriate forums.

Bullying can include:

- physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc
- name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation and the continual ignoring of individuals
- sectarian/racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- sexual comments and /or suggestions
- unwanted physical contact

### **Our Values and commitments in this regard**

- We believe that everybody has the responsibility to work together to stop bullying – the child, the parent, the coach, the youth worker, the sport's official
- We are committed to having appropriate forums should be established within the organisation, including children, parents, youth workers and other agencies, to address, monitor and stop bullying
- Commitment to the early identification of bullying and prompt, collective action to deal with it
- We believe that Children should be encouraged to take a role in stopping bullying in their club
- We undertake to regularly review our Policy and practice in the light of changing needs and changes adopted by other agencies (e.g. schools).

### **Support to the Child**

- Children should know who will listen to and support them
- Any advice and assistance should be given by an appropriately trained and experienced worker
- Children should have access to Helpline numbers

- Children should be told what is being recorded, in what context and why

### **Support to the Parents/Guardians**

- Parents/Guardians should be advised on local policy and practice about bullying
- Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the child's parent(s)/guardians
- Parental/Guardian advice on action will be sought and agreements made as to what action should be taken
- Information and advice on coping with bullying will be given  
Support should be offered to the parent(s) including information on other agencies or support line.

### **What will help stamp out bullying in our club**

to open the door to children wishing to talk about bullying or any other issue that affects them. Barriers to talking need to be broken down to enable children to approach adults

- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported, whether the child being bullied or the child who is bullying
- Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to **all** those involved
- Children being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying
- Sanctions involving long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, should be avoided