



Twisted Cheer & Dance's Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy

1. Scope and purpose

This Policy sets out Twisted Cheer & Dance's position and approach toward bullying and harassment. This Policy covers all members, connected participants and staff regardless of age or position.

Everyone has the responsibility to ensure that the sporting environment is respectful of everyone's right to take part in and enjoy their sport.

Differences, feelings, views and beliefs should be respected and valued and no one made to feel undervalued because of who they are. Bullying and harassment can have devastating effects on a person's self-worth, mental and physical health and be highly disruptive to everyone's right to enjoy their sport.

Twisted Cheer & Dance will challenge bullying attitudes and behaviours and encourages everyone to do the same, to create an environment where everyone is made to feel safe and able to enjoy their part in the sport of Cheerleading & Dance.

Twisted Cheer & Dance sets high standards of conduct for all its members and connected participants which are set out in the Codes of Conduct. Breach of these expectations will be handled through local resolution with involved parties, where formal action is not instigated by the person who is experiencing problems with the behaviour of another member. In most cases, local resolution will be the most appropriate way of handling these matters, as there will be knowledge of the people and situations involved.

In some instances, the behaviour or its consequences may be of such a serious nature that the issue becomes a safeguarding concern and is addressed through those procedures.

This Policy defines bullying and harassment, and outlines a framework for responding to and preventing these forms of behaviour, although these should not be taken as an exhaustive set of recommendations.



This Policy is designed as a guide for Twisted Cheer & Dance members, participants, and staff about how to:

- ◆ Recognise bullying or harassing behaviour
- ◆ Respond to bullying or harassing behaviour.
- ◆ Seek assistance with addressing issues which have led to, or been caused by, bullying or harassing behaviour.

2. Definition of bullying

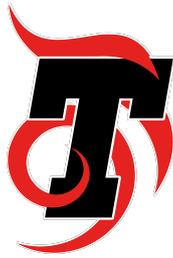
There is no one definition of bullying. In general terms it can be defined as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour; the habitual, cruel or overbearing treatment of one person by another, or by more than one person. The behaviour is intentional and is designed to undermine, humiliate or injure the person, use force on one person by way of aggressive or intimidating behaviour. Anyone can be bullied, however the person being bullied may be perceived to be physically or mentally smaller or weaker and there could be an imbalance of power.

Bullying behaviour may be verbal, non-verbal, direct or indirect and may involve threats, physical assault, stalking, coercion, manipulation, blackmail or extortion.

Bullying behaviour may be more accurately described as discrimination, when the trigger for bullying behaviour is due to a person's personal characteristics – for example their culture, sexual orientation or disability. When this is the case there may be bigotry involved which should be challenged and handled with specific awareness of the defining characteristics. Twisted Cheer & Dance has a zero tolerance to discrimination.

3. Types of behaviour

- ◆ Types of bullying behaviour include:
- ◆ Name calling
- ◆ Isolating/excluding
- ◆ Spreading rumours
- ◆ Using derogatory ways of treating or speaking to and about a person
- ◆ Cyber bullying Differential treatment Direct discrimination.



4. Definition of Harassment

Harassment is a criminal offence, though there is no specific defined term, rather various offences under different legislation. It is the repeated attempt to impose unwanted communication or contact on a person or persons, in a manner which is expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person. Harassment may exist where there has only been one act, which is of sufficient seriousness in nature to be a criminal act. Harassment is a more serious course of conduct than bullying, although the two can be very close in character.

5. What is bullying and harassing behaviour?

Whilst most of us can recognise these forms of behaviour, it is less easy to define them in a way which covers all scenarios. It can be even harder to recognise such behaviour in yourself and to know how to respond to these behaviours. In any bullying and harassment situation there will be a number of contributing factors, and how to approach resolving a situation is therefore not easily defined in a Policy. Flexibility, sensitivity and common sense will always be needed to find the best resolution to these situations.

6. Discrimination

Bullying and harassment may entail discriminatory behaviour. Twisted Cheer & Dance has a zero tolerance stance on discriminatory behaviour and for this reason will treat any such cases as of particular seriousness. All allegations of discrimination must be reported in order that the appropriate action can be taken and that the level of such incidence and the nature of them, are known. We will then be better placed to target resources and awareness toward addressing the identified issues.

7. Roles and responsibilities in tackling bullying and harassment?

Everyone has a responsibility to create a safe and enjoyable environment for others to play and take part in Cheerleading and Dance. Everyone contributes to the culture of the sport and should be guided by the Codes of Conduct which apply to them.

8. What Twisted Cheer & Dance will do to prevent bullying.

Every allegation of bullying or harassment will be investigated and responded to appropriately.



Anyone involved in the organisation will be made aware of the expected standards of behaviour and what to do when they become aware of behaviour which falls short of these expectations. By promoting and implementing this Policy and the Codes of Conduct, Twisted Cheer & Dance can ensure that this is achieved and that all young people, parents/carers and any other concerned person know who to talk to about their concerns and what will happen as a result.

Our Club Safeguarding Officer will act as the lead person with responsibility for advising and acting on safeguarding concerns. This person is given access to appropriate training and supported in their role by Twisted Cheer & Dance management.

Twisted Cheer & Dance will provide people with support, through keeping them informed and involved, as appropriate and by referring them to external support services. Some of the national agencies and advice lines are listed below.

9. Participants and Coaches

As with any safeguarding issue, everyone accepting their role in ensuring a safe environment will make it less likely that bullying or harassing behaviour can occur. Being aware of the local procedures for Reporting a Concern, will equip you to take action when you think something is wrong - when you have overheard a comment, seen someone upset or know that someone is treating another person badly.

People in positions of trust are particularly responsible for acting as good role models and for recognising and praising positive achievements and behaviours, as well as taking appropriate action when there are negative behaviours. Coaches and officials are especially important in acting as positive role models and promoting the high standards of behaviour which Twisted Cheer & Dance expects.

Explaining rules and practices helps reinforce the standards expected of participants. Acting on behaviour which falls short of this ensures that unacceptable behaviour is punished. Doing nothing gives bullies a license to continue and makes the victim feel doubly picked on and unvalued.

10. Parents/carers:

All parents and carers have access to a copy of the Codes of Conduct and be aware of what the expectations are on them, what they can expect from the club, and be aware of what the local procedures are for handling allegations of bullying or harassment.

When a concern has been raised about a young person, the parents should be made aware of the concern and be given the opportunity to discuss it. The parents of both the



person against whom a complaint is made and those of the person who has suffered as a consequence of the behaviour, should be consulted on action to be taken and be part of any agreements to be put in place to tackle the issue.

11. Young people:

Young people need to know who to talk to about any concerns, and should feel confident that they will be listened to and action taken. Speaking out can be a brave step to take, and it is crucial that once this step has been taken the response to it does not put that person off opening up more about what they are experiencing.

Young people need to be told what will happen if they raise a concern and supported through the process. They should be assured of a safe environment in which to carry on Cheerleading and Dance, and not be made to feel that they can't take part in their sport.

Young people should also be provided with referrals to support lines and other sources of external help, but the club also needs to keep involved and keep the young person informed and comfortable with the way in which an issue is being dealt with. The voice of the young person must be heard and listened to, whilst objective investigation is made and acceptable agreements for any change in behaviour made.

12. Sources of support

- ◆ National Bullying Helpline - <http://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk>
- ◆ Cyber Bullying - www.cybersmile.org
- ◆ Stop Text Bullying - <http://stoptextbully.com>
- ◆ Anti-Bullying Alliance - <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk> 0207 843 1901
- ◆ Bullying UK: help@bullying.co.uk 0808 800 2222
- ◆ Get Connected Free confidential help for U25s. Emotional support and advice for bullying; self-harm; eating disorders; homelessness; drink/drugs; family issues; sex and work. www.getconnected.org.uk 0808 808 4994