**Orwell Panthers Athletics Club – Anti-Bullying Policy**

Orwell Panthers Athletics Club is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with registered no. 1163145 (**OPAC**). In this policy, a reference to ‘we’, ‘our’ or ‘us’ is a reference to OPAC.

OPAC is committed to providing a safe environment for all of its members and will not tolerate bullying of any kind. Our club has an open culture and all members, coaches, volunteers and associated persons should feel comfortable and are encouraged to speak out if they become aware of any bullying incidents or behaviours.

**Bullying**

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person, resulting in pain and distress to the victim. It can take many forms including emotional (for example, excluding someone, threatening gestures, hiding clothing), physical (for example hitting, kicking, pushing) and verbal (for example name-calling, spreading rumours, teasing).

**Objects**

As set out in our charitable objects, we are committed to promoting equality and inclusion in athletics and ensuring a duty of care to all members of the club.

We recognise the need to respond promptly and decisively to bullying and ensure our people feel safe and protected.

**Indicative signposts for responsible persons to be aware of**

Responsible persons should be aware of signs of bullying, for example of a member:

1. reporting that they are being bullied;
2. who is unwilling to attend sessions or reporting that they feel ill before sessions;
3. becoming withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence;
4. has their possessions damaged or disappearing;
5. has unexplained cuts or bruises;
6. appears frightened to say what is wrong;
7. is emotional or tearful, aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable; or
8. stops eating.

Indicative signs of bullying should be investigated with proper care and attention. Where appropriate, these concerns should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer without delay.

**Anti-bulling procedure**

Without prejudice to the Disciplinary and Appeals Procedure, in response to a bullying incident or suspected incident:

1. the incident should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer;
2. if the allegation is particularly serious, the incident may be referred to the UKA for advice alongside any club action. The UKA recommend that they are consulted in particular regarding alleged bullying by adults of children. Other organisations (e.g. the police or social services) may be consulted if thought appropriate in particularly serious cases
3. where reconciliation might be effective, the alleged parties should be encouraged to apologise;
4. the individual alleging bullying and, where appropriate, their parent(s) and/or carer(s) shall be invited to meet with the Safeguarding Officer and up to two other members of the committee (together, the **Panel**) to discuss the incident. OPAC shall take minutes of any meeting and these shall be agreed afterwards between the individual/parent(s)/carer(s) and the Panel to represent a true account of the meeting;
5. a similar meeting shall take place between the Panel and the individual that is alleged to be bullying and minutes agreed;
6. if it is decided by the Panel that bullying has taken place then an appropriate warning or other similar action should be taken and all parties should be made aware of the action decided upon;
7. coaches, assistant coaches or other responsible persons working closely with the individual(s) concerned should be informed confidentially and be prepared to intervene to prevent any further incidents;
8. as appropriate, an individual with responsibility should attempt to assist the individual(s) responsible for the bullying incident to change their behaviour; and
9. If reasonably considered necessary, the Safeguarding Officer shall instigate the process outlined in the Disciplinary and Appeals Procedure.

**Other relevant policies/procedures standing against bullying**

We refer to the club constitution, the Athlete Code of Conduct, the Equal Opportunities Policy, the Safeguarding Policy and the Transgender Policy regarding the standards of behaviour expected of our athletes towards others.

**Orwell Panthers Athletics Club:**

**Date:**