

Grievance Policy

Updated: October 2024

1. Purpose

- The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all grievances raised by members, players, coaches, volunteers, or parents within Cranleigh Football Club (the Club) are addressed fairly, consistently, and in a timely manner.

2. Scope

- This policy applies to all members of Cranleigh Football Club, including players, coaches, managers, officials, volunteers, and parents.

3. Policy Statement

- Cranleigh Football Club is committed to creating a positive, respectful, and inclusive environment. We recognise that from time to time, individuals may have concerns or complaints. This policy outlines the procedure for addressing such grievances to ensure they are handled appropriately.

4. Definitions

- **Grievance:** A formal complaint raised by an individual concerning an action, situation, or behaviour that they perceive to be unfair, unjust, or in violation of the club's policies.
- **Complainant:** The individual raising the grievance.
- **Respondent:** The individual(s) against whom the grievance is raised.

Grievance Procedure

Step 1: Informal Resolution

Individuals are encouraged to resolve grievances informally through direct communication with the parties involved, where appropriate and safe to do so. If attempts at resolution by the appropriate Team Manager do not prove satisfactory, or if the concern is directly related to the Team Manager, the member should be advised to make a formal written complaint to the club

Step 2: Formal Grievance Submission

- If the grievance cannot be resolved informally, the complainant must submit a written grievance by emailing complaints@cranleighfc.co.uk or clicking on the complaints link on the club website within fourteen (14) days of the incident. For transparency the complaints email is delivered to the club Welfare Officer. The Welfare Officer will share the written grievance with both the club Chairman and the club Secretary on receipt. Similarly, should a grievance be received via any other means to any member of the coaching team or committee, it will be circulated to the club officers named above.
- The grievance should include:
 - The nature of the complaint.
 - Any relevant facts, dates, times, and places.
 - The names of any witnesses or individuals involved.
 - Any other supporting information.
 - Any steps already taken to resolve the issue.
 - The desired outcome.

Step 3: Acknowledgment

- The Club Welfare Officer will acknowledge receipt of the formal grievance within seven (7) days and inform the complainant of the next steps.

Step 4: Investigation

- An investigation will be conducted, which may include:
 - Interviews with the complainant, respondent(s), and any witnesses.
 - Gathering relevant information and evidence.
 - Ensuring the investigation is conducted in a confidential, impartial, and timely manner.
- In most cases, the Chairperson (or Welfare Officer, depending on the nature of the grievance) will co-opt other committee members to form a temporary Grievance Review Panel to assist with the investigation. The composition of this panel will vary depending on the nature of the grievance. The date of the Grievance Review Panel hearing will be communicated to all concerned parties.

Step 5: Presentation to the Grievance Review Panel

- The results of the investigation will be presented to the Grievance Review Panel to deliver a balanced, impartial view of all facts, keeping parties involved as anonymous as possible, together with the recommended action/outcome.
- The Grievance Review Panel will vote on accepting or declining the proposal. The Chairperson, although present and participative in the discussion at this stage, has no vote.
- The decision will be communicated in writing to both parties within thirty (30) days from the original acknowledgment of the grievance and no later than five (5) working days after the Grievance Review Panel has met.

Step 6: Appeal

- If either party is dissatisfied with the decision, they may submit an appeal in writing to the Chairperson within fourteen (14) days of receiving the decision. The appeal should outline the reasons for the appeal:
 - The decision was unfair.
 - Unfair procedures were followed.
 - New evidence or information has come to light.
- The Chairperson will co-opt committee members who were not part of the original investigation to form a temporary Grievance Appeal Panel. The number of co-opted members should be specified (e.g., three members) to ensure a balanced review. The composition of this panel will vary depending on the nature of the grievance.

Step 7: Final Resolution

- The Grievance Appeal Panel will review the appeal, conduct further investigations if necessary, and make a final decision. The decision of the Grievance Appeal Panel is final and binding on all parties involved.

Step 8: Record Keeping

- All documentation related to grievances and their resolutions will be kept confidential and stored securely by the Chairperson. Records will be maintained according to the club's policies.

Special Consideration for Safeguarding Concerns

All complaints of a child protection nature will be referred automatically by the Chairperson to the Club Welfare Officer for investigation in line with the Club's Safeguarding Children policy.

- **Confidentiality**
 - All proceedings related to a grievance shall be kept confidential to protect the privacy of all parties involved.
- **Non-Retaliation**
 - The club prohibits retaliation against any individual for raising a grievance or participating in the grievance process. Any form of retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action.
- **Monitoring and Review**
 - The club's Grievance Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with any changes in legislation or club rules.
- **Amendments**
 - This grievance policy may be amended from time to time to ensure it meets the needs of the club and complies with all relevant laws and governing body regulations.
- **Training and Awareness**
 - Regular training and awareness programs will be conducted for all members to understand the grievance process and their rights and responsibilities under this policy.
- **Contact Information**

For submitting grievances or questions regarding the grievance procedure, please contact:

- **Chairperson:** Ian Dobbs, chairman@cranleighfc.co.uk
- **Club Secretary:** Pete Ridley, secretary@cranleighfc.co.uk
- **Club Welfare Officer:** Lisa Hard, welfare@cranleighfc.co.uk

Common Grievance Issues

- Playing Time Disputes
- Selection Issues
- Behavioural Issues
- Safety and Welfare
- Communication Problems
- Disciplinary Actions
- Coaching Concerns
- Financial Disputes
- Policy and Rule Enforcement
- Ethical and Integrity Issues

Sanctions Overview

- Potential sanctions for breaches of policy include:
 - Verbal Warning
 - Written Warning
 - Suspension
 - Exclusion from Selection
 - Mandatory Training or Counselling
 - Demotion
 - Termination of Membership
 - Revocation of Privileges
 - Reporting to Higher Authorities (e.g., Surrey FA)
 - No Action

