

MERLEY FOOTBALL CLUB



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

LAST UPDATED: MAY 2026

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COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

In the event that any Youth Member, Parent/Carer, Club or FA Official or Coach feels that he or she has suffered discrimination, experienced, or witnessed something of concern or that the Club's Policies, Rules or Code of Conduct has been broken they should report the matter to Merley Football Club.

Resolution (Direct):

For issues that are straightforward and easily resolved, requiring little or no investigation, direct contact with your team coach / manager or another club official might remedy the issue or concern that has arisen.

This is not to undervalue minor concerns, rather in some instances a remedy can be decided upon quickly and to the satisfaction of all (an apology, explanation or other action). For example, it may be some aspect of Merley Football Club Policy that has not been fully understood by a parent, or incorrectly applied by the coach / manager, or Merley Football Club policy itself is unclear or contradictory.

Direct contact with the 'frontline' person (e.g. Coach) might be the obvious and simplest approach to take. Merley Football Club would expect the issue to be resolved within one week and the coach / manager or alternatively another club official is required to report to the Chairperson and the General Secretary, referencing the concern and resolution offered so that this can be agreed and recorded in the minutes of the next arranged official meeting.

More Serious Concerns:

There is always the potential for more serious concerns to arise that require a more significant intervention. In these instances, a more formal process is required so that the club can both record and address the issue or concern. In the first instance, all grievances should be addressed to one of the Chairperson, General Secretary or Welfare Officer. If this is not possible, the final option is to contact another committee member. The following applies:

- The complainant should be asked to make their complaint in writing, detailing their complaint, and how they can be contacted so Merley Football Club can keep them informed of progress or their complaint.
- Merley Football Club will remain in contact with the Complainant and deal with the complaint constructively.
- The complainant will receive timely confirmation by phone or email that Merley Football Club has received and is dealing with their complaint, and that this should not be more than 5 days from receiving the complaint.
- Merley Football Club will investigate the complaint and respond to the complaint within 30 days of receipt (either with a proposed resolution, or details of further actions to be taken).
- Merley Football Club will investigate the complaint by looking at what might have gone wrong and/or what needs to be done to rectify the cause of the complaint. The club will also assess whether someone has suffered any injustice, and what remedy would be fair and proportionate in the circumstances.
- The Club will consider whether to consult or inform The FA in relation to any breach of FA rules or guidelines.
- Where the complaint indicates a law may have been broken, the Club will inform the relevant statutory authority;
- Complaints that have a general significance across the club might necessitate wider consultation, which might have implications for the interests of Parents, Youth members and Coaches but from different perspectives, and therefore involve wider consultation and even discussion by the committee.
- Sensitive complaints may need to be dealt with confidentially (e.g. that involve a Safeguarding context) and include guidance from specific Officers of The Club, e.g. Safeguarding or Respect Officer or from The FA.
- Learning from something that has gone, or is going wrong, and putting right mistakes, is paramount. Seeking to hide mistakes is counter to the wider interests of the club, its members, and volunteers and therefore any investigation should be open, fair and respectful to all concerned.

Details of the Welfare officer can be found on our website www.merleyfc.com.

Further information on our grievance actions can be found in the Club Charter at www.merleyfc.com.