



CHESTERFIELD FC

CHESTERFIELD FC ACADEMY & CHESTERFIELD FC COMMUNITY TRUST

Complaints Policy

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Policy Statement

- 1.1.** Chesterfield Football Club, and the CFC Academy ('the Club') welcomes comments and complaints from all members of the Clubs community and from the general public. We use this process to improve our services to stakeholders, football supporters, and the wider community in which we exist.
- 1.2.** Chesterfield Football Club is committed to the continuous improvement of the services it provides. We do however recognise that there may be occasions whereby we don't meet an individual's requirements or expectations. For these reasons it is our policy that all complaints should be;
 - 1.2.1. Treated seriously and in an open manner
 - 1.2.2. Acknowledged immediately, preferably in writing
 - 1.2.3. Investigated
 - 1.2.4. Resolved, wherever it is reasonably practicable, within no longer than 13 working weeks. NB resolution might not mean the Club agrees with the complainant.
 - 1.2.5. Used as feedback to drive the continuous improvement of the Club

Scope

- 2.1.** This policy applies to all members of the Club community but does not replace staff procedures for disciplinary and grievances. Any complaints or concerns raised which, in the Clubs opinion, may have potential safeguarding implications will automatically be referred to the Safeguarding Senior Manager for management in line with the Clubs Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy or Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy as appropriate.

Responsibilities

- 3.1.** All Club staff have a responsibility for receiving complaints, treating them seriously, and dealing with them promptly and courteously in accordance with this policy.
- 3.2.** Senior Managers have a responsibility for investigating and resolving complaints, relative to their area of knowledge and expertise.
- 3.3.** The Chief Executive is responsible for resolving complaints which have not been resolved during the previous two stages. The decision made by the Chief Executive is final.
- 3.4.** The Board is responsible for ensuring that this complaints policy and procedure is operating effectively and may become directly involved if a complaint is directed against the Chief Executive Officer or Board member.

Actions to Implement and Develop Policy

4.1. Stage 1

The Club expects complaints to be made informally to a member of staff in the first instance. Where this is not possible, or does not result in a satisfactory resolution, the complaint should be submitted in writing as follows;

- via email to: hello@chesterfield-fc.co.uk
- via post to: Supporter Liaison Officer, Chesterfield Football Club, SMH Group Stadium, 1866 Sheffield Road, Chesterfield S41 8NZ

The Club usually expects complaints to be made by the person concerned. However, it will consider complaints made by a parent, carer or advocate. Where there is a potential safeguarding risk these will always be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Senior Manager.

Anonymous complaints can be submitted and will always be investigated where possible, however in these circumstances the club cannot provide a response directly to the complainant. Staff should use the normal channels of communication available to them where possible.

All complaints will be forwarded to either the Supporter Liaison Officer or Safeguarding Senior Manager, who will acknowledge receipt within 14 days. A manager within the Club will then be identified to investigate the complaint and respond as appropriate.

4.2. Stage 2

The relevant manager will respond in writing within 7 working days, explaining what has happened as a result of the complaint. Where this involves a member of staff, specific detail of any action taken will not be made available. This is to ensure our staff are afforded appropriate confidentiality and dignity at work.

If the complaint requires further investigation that cannot be carried out within 7 working days, the investigating manager shall keep the complainant informed and indicate the expected timescale for a response to be given.

4.3. Stage 3

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the relevant manager's response, then the complaint will be forwarded to a Senior Manager to resolve. For the avoidance of doubt a Senior Manager is someone who reports to the CEO.

The Senior Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 working weeks and a final response will be sent within 7 working weeks to allow time for further investigations to be carried out where appropriate.

4.4. Stage 4

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Senior Manager's response, then the complaint will be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer will respond within 4 working weeks. The Chief Executive Officer's decision is final.

4.5. Independent Football Ombudsman

If the complainant is still dissatisfied, they have the right to submit a complaint to the Independent Football Ombudsman (IFO).

Complaints should be submitted in writing as follows;

- Via email to contact@theifo.co.uk
- Via the website www.theifo.co.uk
- Via post to The Independent Football Ombudsman, Suite 49, 33 Great George Street, Leeds LS1 3AJ

4.6. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Club will maintain a confidential record of all complaints, appeals and outcomes. Information from these records will be used to promote continuous improvement and learning outcomes for the Club. Anonymised data will be provided to the Board from time to time for review.