



We only do positive.



RESPECT

The ArcOframe Stadium, Ruskin Drive Sports Village, St Helens, WA10 6RP

## Complaints Policy

**Pilkington Football Club (the “Club”, “we”, “our”, “us”) welcomes comments, feedback and complaints from all members of our community. We use this process to learn and further improve the high quality services we offer.**

We recognise however that, occasionally, mistakes can be made and this will not always meet the individual's requirements or expectations. For these reasons, it is the Club's policy that all complaints should be received positively, treated seriously and in an open manner, acknowledged immediately, investigated, and resolved as quickly and as fairly as possible.

### What is a complaint?

The Club regards a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

### What can I complain about?

The following list is not exhaustive:

- the quality and standard of any service we provide;
- our failure to provide a service;
- the quality of our facilities;
- unfair treatment or inappropriate behaviour by a Club coach, manager, official or other volunteer;
- discrimination by the Club or anybody associated with the Club that you believe you have suffered;
- something of concern that you have witnessed or experienced that you believe has breached the Club's Rules, Policies, or Codes of Conduct.

Your complaint may involve more than one aspect of the above, more than one section, or be about someone working on our behalf.

A Club official, volunteer or employee who holds a reasonable belief that illegal or dishonest practices may have taken place at the Club should pursue their complaint through the Club's Whistleblowing Policy.

The Club will direct anyone who believes that they have been subject to criminal or illegal behaviour, either on the Club's premises or at an official Club

event outside the Club's premises, to report the matter to the Police or the appropriate authorities. The Club would also expect such incidents to be reported immediately to a Club steward, security person or Club official.

The Club will not involve itself in personal disputes or arbitrating in matters which it considers fall outside its jurisdiction.

Any complaints or concerns raised which relate to an individual's conduct or behaviour and have potential safeguarding implications for any individual (child or adult) will be assessed initially by the Club Welfare Officer. Where appropriate, these concerns will then be managed through the Club's Safeguarding Children Policy or Safeguarding Adults Policy and procedures.

### What can't I complain about?

There are some things the Club cannot deal with through its complaints procedure. These include:

- a request under Freedom of Information or data protection legislation;
- a request for information or an explanation of policy or practice;
- an issue which is being, or has been, considered by the Police, a court, tribunal or other legal process;
- an attempt to have a complaint reconsidered where the Club has already given its final decision following an investigation.



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## How do I complain?

You can complain in person, by phone, in writing, or by email. It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you raise them as soon as you become aware of the issue.

In the first instance, please talk to the relevant coach, team manager, volunteer or other Club official so that they can try to resolve any problems on the spot.

When complaining, please tell us:

- your name and address;
- as much as you can about the complaint;
- what has gone wrong;
- how you would like us to resolve the matter.

All complaints will be treated by the Club in strictest confidence and no complainant bringing a complaint under this procedure will be treated less favourably by the Club. If there is evidence to the contrary, the relevant coach, manager, official or volunteer may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

## What will happen if I complain?

Our complaints procedure has two stages:

### Stage 1 - Frontline Resolution

For issues that are straightforward and easily resolved, requiring little or no investigation, a private word to the relevant coach, team manager, volunteer or other 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 on-the-spot apology, explanation or other immediate action). For example, it may be some aspect of Club policy has not been fully understood by a parent, or incorrectly applied by a coach, or the Club policy itself is unclear or contradictory. A private word with the 'frontline' person (e.g. coach) might be the obvious and simplest approach to take.

The Club would expect the issue to be resolved within one week, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If you are not satisfied with the response we give at this stage, we will tell you what you can do next. If you choose to, you can take your complaint to Stage 2 of the complaints procedure. You may choose to do this immediately or shortly after you get our initial decision.

### Stage 2 - Complaint Investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint - those that have not been resolved at Stage 1, and those that are complex and/or more serious and require detailed and more significant investigation.

Although we will also accept complaints that are made in person or on the phone, we encourage you to follow this up in writing or by email in order to best assist the investigation process. When using Stage 2, you should report the matter to the Club Secretary or to another member of the management committee.

In addition to the information provided above (see 'How do I complain?'), the report should include:

- details of what, when and where the occurrence(s) took place;
- any witness statement and names;
- names of any others who have been treated in a similar way;
- details of any former complaints made about the incident or matter, date, when and to whom made; and
- a preference for a solution to the incident or matter.

We will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days, consider whether the report falls to be dealt with as a complaint under these procedures seeking further information where necessary to clarify the matter, and tell you who is dealing with your complaint;



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- discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for;
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days, unless there are exceptional circumstances;
- tell you if our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress;
- 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;
- assess whether someone has suffered any injustice, and what remedy would be fair and proportionate in the circumstances;
- ensure that no conflict of interest arises, whether perceived or actual, and that the person(s) investigating the complaint is/are both able and also seen to be able to act impartially
- consider whether to consult or inform The Football Association ("FA") in relation to any breach of FA rules or guidelines;
- inform the relevant statutory authority where the complaint indicates a law may have been broken;
- deal with sensitive complaints confidentially (e.g. those that involve a safeguarding context) and take guidance where appropriate from the Club Welfare Officer or from The FA;
- at all times, recognise that learning from something that has gone, or is going wrong, and putting right mistakes, is paramount and that seeking to hide mistakes is counter to the wider interests of the Club, our members and volunteers; and
- ensure that any investigation will always be open, fair and respectful to all concerned.

### Further complaint

Where the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they may request that the matter is reconsidered by the Club's full management committee.

The complainant should submit their request in writing, outlining the reasons for their request, within two

weeks of receiving the notification of the outcome of their complaint to the Club Secretary who will arrange for the matter to be considered by the full management committee within one calendar month of receiving such a request.

Any management committee member who was party in any way to the original complaint, either as the subject of the complaint or as the investigating person, shall recuse themselves from any further involvement in the complaint.

In considering whether or not to review the original decision, the management committee will have regard to the following in particular:

- any new/additional evidence provided by the complainant;
- whether a sufficient investigation of the complaint has taken place; and
- whether the outcome of the complaint is "reasonable", having regard to all the evidence available.

Once the management committee has reached a final decision on the matter, it will be communicated to the complainant by the Club Secretary at the earliest opportunity. The management committee's decision will be final.

### Statutory Rights

None of the above shall preclude any individual from exercising their normal statutory or legal rights.

### Vexatious/Serial Complaints

All complaints will be treated seriously and accepted at face value. However, should evidence exist that provides a reasonable belief that a complaint may be vexatious or mischievous or in instances of repeated, unsubstantiated complaints over the same issue, the Club reserves the right to remove itself from any further discussions or considerations of the matter.



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