



Fishburn Community Football Club Disciplinary Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the standards of behavior and financial commitment set out in the **Players Code of Conduct** and **Parents Code of Conduct** are maintained. This policy applies to all registered players, parents, guardians, and club officials of Fishburn Community Football Club (FCFC).

2. Levels of Misconduct

To ensure fairness, the club categorizes breaches into three levels:

- **Level 1: Minor Breaches** (e.g., occasional lateness, minor dissent, poor sportsmanship, or first-time kit/dress code issues).
 - **Level 2: Serious Breaches** (e.g., persistent minor breaches, offensive language, social media misuse, or bringing the club into minor disrepute).
 - **Level 3: Gross Misconduct** (e.g., physical violence, verbal abuse toward officials, safeguarding breaches, illegal activities, or repeated serious breaches).
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3. The Disciplinary Process

Except in cases of Gross Misconduct, the club will follow a tiered approach to resolve issues:

1. **Stage 1: Informal Warning (Verbal)** – A private discussion between the Team Manager and the individual to resolve the issue and agree on improvements.
 2. **Stage 2: Formal Written Warning** – Issued by the Club Committee if the behavior continues or if a Level 2 breach occurs. This remains on the individual's club record for the remainder of the season.
 3. **Stage 3: Suspension** – The individual is barred from attending matches and/or training for a period defined by the Committee (typically 1–3 weeks).
 4. **Stage 4: Expulsion** – Permanent removal from Fishburn Community Football Club.
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4. Financial Ineligibility (The "3-Month Rule")

To ensure the club remains sustainable, the following financial rules are strictly enforced:

- **Payment Standards:** Junior subscriptions are **£15 per month**; Adult subscriptions are **£20 per month**.
 - **Arrears Notification:** When a player reaches **two months** of unpaid subscriptions, the Club Treasurer or Manager will issue a formal reminder.
 - **The Three-Month Limit:** If arrears reach **three months**, the player is automatically moved to "Inactive Status."
 - **Consequence:** The player is ineligible to participate in any matches or training sessions until the full balance is cleared or a payment plan is formally agreed upon with the Treasurer.
 - **Confidentiality:** FCFC encourages any member facing genuine hardship to contact the Committee privately *before* reaching the 3-month limit to discuss support options.
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5. Termination of Membership (Gross Misconduct)

Fishburn Community Football Club reserves the right to **permanently expel** any player, parent, or official without prior warnings if their actions constitute **Gross Misconduct**.

A. Definition of Gross Misconduct

Gross misconduct is defined as any action fundamentally incompatible with the club's values or the safety of its members, including:

- **Violence or Threatening Behavior:** Physical assault or credible threats of violence toward any person.
- **Safeguarding Breaches:** Any action that compromises the safety or welfare of a child or vulnerable adult.
- **Discrimination:** Use of any language or behavior that is racist, sexist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory.
- **Illegal Activities:** Possession or use of illegal substances, or criminal activity on club premises or at club events.
- **Severe Reputational Damage:** Deliberate actions (including on social media) intended to bring the club, its officials, or its sponsors into serious disrepute.
- **Theft or Fraud:** Misappropriation of club funds, equipment, or property.

B. The Removal Process

1. **Immediate Suspension:** Upon a report of Gross Misconduct, the individual will be suspended from all club activities immediately while the Committee conducts a summary investigation.
2. **Committee Review:** A minimum of three Committee members will review the evidence (witness statements, screenshots, etc.).

3. **Final Decision:** If the Committee is satisfied that Gross Misconduct occurred, a **Notice of Permanent Expulsion** will be issued in writing. This decision is effective immediately.
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6. No Refund Policy

In the event of expulsion for misconduct or suspension due to financial arrears, Fishburn Community Football Club will **not** issue refunds for monthly subscriptions, registration fees, or kit costs already paid.

7. Right to Appeal

Every member has the right to appeal a Stage 2, 3, or 4 decision.

- Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Club Secretary within **7 days** of the disciplinary action.
 - An Appeals Panel (consisting of at least two committee members not involved in the original incident) will review the case. Their decision is final.
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By registering as a member of Fishburn Community Football Club, you acknowledge that you have read, understood, and agreed to abide by this Disciplinary Policy and the associated Codes of Conduct.