



Complaints Process and Policy

Solihull Superstars FC Grassroots Football Team

Introduction

Solihull Superstars FC is committed to providing a supportive, safe, and inclusive environment for all players, parents, coaches, officials, and volunteers involved in grassroots football. We recognise that from time to time, concerns or complaints may arise regarding aspects of our club's operations, behaviour, or decision-making. To maintain transparency and trust, we have established this complaints process and policy, ensuring all grievances are handled promptly, fairly, and respectfully.

Principles of the Complaints Policy

- **Accessibility:** The complaints process is open to everyone involved with Solihull Superstars FC, including players, parents/carers, coaches, volunteers, and spectators.
- **Confidentiality:** All complaints will be managed in a confidential manner. Only those directly involved in investigating or resolving the complaint will have access to relevant information.
- **Impartiality:** Complaints will be handled impartially, without prejudice or favour, to ensure a fair outcome.
- **Timeliness:** Complaints will be acknowledged and resolved as quickly as possible, in accordance with the complexity and nature of the issue.
- **Transparency:** All parties involved will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of their complaint.
- **No Retaliation:** No individual will be penalised or retaliated against for raising a genuine concern or complaint.

Scope of the Policy

This policy covers complaints related to:

- Player welfare and safety
- Behaviour of coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators
- Safeguarding concerns
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion issues
- Club administration and decision-making
- Facilities, fixtures, and equipment
- Bullying, discrimination, or harassment
- Any other matter arising within Solihull Superstars FC



Raising a Complaint

Who can complain?

- Players
- Parents and guardians
- Coaches and volunteers
- Officials and referees
- Members of the community or spectators

How to raise a complaint?

Complaints can be raised using the following methods:

- **In writing:** Send an email to the Club Secretary. Please include your name, contact details, details of the complaint, and any supporting information.
- **Verbally:** Speak directly to a team manager, coach, club official, or safeguarding officer at a match, training session, or club event. A written record will be made of your complaint.
- **Anonymous complaints:** While we encourage complainants to identify themselves, anonymous complaints will be considered if they contain enough detail to warrant investigation.

Contact details:

- Email: Solihullsuperstars@yahoo.com
For the attention of one or all of the following:
 - **Head of Child Protection & Welfare/Safeguarding:** Jane Bishop
 - **Head of Coaching/Club Associate Director:** Tom Darby-Ralph
 - **Club Secretary/Club Associate Director:** Tracie Booker

Complaints Process

The complaints process is designed to be clear and straightforward. There are three stages:

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

- Where possible, complaints should be raised directly with the person or persons involved, or with their immediate supervisor (e.g., coach, manager).
- Many issues can be resolved quickly and amicably through informal discussion and mutual understanding.
- If the complainant is not comfortable discussing the matter informally, or if the issue is not resolved, the complaint should proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

- The complainant should submit a written complaint to the Club Secretary, including all relevant details and any supporting evidence.
- The Club will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days.
- An independent panel, consisting of at least two committee members (and the safeguarding officer if necessary), will be appointed to review the complaint.
- The panel will investigate the matter, which may involve interviewing relevant parties and reviewing evidence.
- The complainant and the person(s) against whom the complaint is made will be given opportunities to present their perspective.
- Within 14 working days of receiving the complaint, the panel will issue a written decision outlining their findings and any recommended action.

Stage 3: Appeal

- If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, they may appeal the decision in writing to the Club Director within 10 working days of receipt of the decision.
- The appeal will be reviewed by a separate panel, not involved in the original investigation.
- The panel may request further evidence or interviews.
- A final decision will be issued within 21 working days of receiving the appeal. This decision will be final and binding.

Safeguarding and Serious Complaints

Any complaint involving child welfare, safeguarding, or potential criminal activity will be escalated immediately to the Club's Safeguarding Officer and, if necessary, relevant external authorities, such as the local Football Association or police. The club will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for safeguarding and child protection.

Record Keeping

- All complaints and outcomes will be recorded and retained securely by the Club Secretary, in accordance with data protection laws.
- Records will include the nature of the complaint, actions taken, timeline, and outcome.
- Records may be reviewed periodically to identify patterns and drive club improvements.



Confidentiality and Data Protection

- All personal information relating to complaints will be managed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Information will only be shared to individuals who require it to investigate and resolve the complaint.
- Complainants may request to review and amend information the club holds about them at any time, through the completion of a Subject Access Request (SAR) form.

Support and Guidance

- The club recognises that raising complaints can be stressful. Support is available for complainants throughout the process, including advice from the safeguarding officer and committee members.
- Those against whom complaints are made will also be offered support and advice, to ensure the process remains balanced and fair.

Policy Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or club circumstances.
- Suggestions for improvement may be made by any member of the club and are welcomed by the committee.

Further Action

If a complaint cannot be resolved within the club, or if it involves a breach of FA regulations, the complainant may escalate the matter to the relevant local Football Association or other regulatory bodies.

Contact Information

For further information or guidance about the complaints process, please contact solihullsuperstars@yahoo.com

Conclusion

Solihull Superstars FC is dedicated to fostering a positive footballing experience for all. The club encourages open communication and feedback, and aims to resolve all complaints constructively, respectfully, and in line with best practices. By adhering to this policy, we hope to maintain the highest standards of integrity, safety, and enjoyment for everyone involved in grassroots football.