



Bicester & District Gymnastics Club CIC

BDGC 018 – Complaints & Escalation Policy

Document Owner: Board of Directors
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1. Purpose

Bicester & District Gymnastics Club C.I.C. ("the Club") is committed to a fair, transparent and structured approach to handling concerns and complaints. This policy sets out how concerns should be raised, how the Club will respond, and what steps follow if a matter requires further action.

This policy applies to all people associated with the Club, including gymnasts, parents and carers, coaches, volunteers and committee members.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members, including coaches, gymnasts, parents/guardians, volunteers, and staff associated with the club. It covers:

- concerns and complaints raised by gymnasts, parents, carers, coaches, volunteers or committee members;
- alleged breaches of club policies, codes of conduct or safeguarding procedures; and
- requests for review of Club decisions affecting a person's participation or membership.

Matters involving child safeguarding or welfare concerns are handled under the Club's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (BDGC 002). Where a concern has a safeguarding dimension, it will be routed to the Welfare Officer immediately, regardless of where it arises in the escalation process.

Matters involving a coach's engagement with the Club are governed by the Coaching Services Contract, not by this policy

3. Raising a Concern

The Club encourages concerns to be raised promptly and in good faith. Anyone raising a concern in good faith will not be treated adversely as a result. Concerns should be raised in the following order

3.1. Step 1: Informal Resolution

Where possible, concerns should first be raised directly and informally with the relevant person or the Head Coach to seek a prompt and proportionate resolution. Many matters can be resolved at this stage without the need for formal process.

3.2. Step 2: Formal Complaint

If informal resolution is not possible or appropriate, a formal complaint should be submitted in writing to the Welfare Officer or the Chair. The complaint should set out:

- The nature of the concern.
- the steps, if any, already taken to resolve it; and

- any supporting evidence or witness accounts.

Where a complaint is about the Chair, it should be directed to the Treasurer or another director.

3.3. Step 3: Acknowledgement and investigation

Upon receiving a formal complaint or concern:

- The Club will acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint within five working days.
- An investigation will be carried out by, or under the oversight of, a person who was not directly involved in the matter being complained about. The investigation will gather relevant evidence and statements. In safeguarding matters, the Welfare Officer will lead and may involve external agencies.
- The Club will keep the person who raised the concern informed of progress, subject to confidentiality obligations to others involved.

3.4. Step 4: Outcome

On completing the investigation, the Club will notify the complainant of the outcome in writing. If the concern is upheld, the Club will take appropriate action as set out in section 4. If no breach is found, the matter will be closed with an explanation provided.

4. Actions Following an Upheld Complaint

The Club will take action proportionate to the nature and severity of the matter. Actions available include

Minor matters

- informal guidance or reminder of expectations;
- written warning; or
- additional training or mentoring.

Moderate matters

- formal written warning with an improvement plan; or
- temporary suspension from coaching, training, or club activities.

Serious matters

- suspension of participation or coaching engagement pending investigation;
- termination of membership or, where applicable, coaching engagement; or
- referral to the IGA, statutory agencies, or other relevant bodies.

5. Repeat Complaints

- The Club is committed to taking all concerns seriously. However, where a complaint is found to be manifestly unfounded, is made in bad faith, or repeats a matter that has already been fully investigated and concluded, the Club reserves the right to decline to reinvestigate, to define a single point of contact for future correspondence, and to treat persistent repetition as a conduct matter in its own right
- A decision to treat a complaint as vexatious or repetitive will be made by the directors, will be communicated in writing with reasons, and will be recorded.

6. Appeals

- A person who receives a formal sanction under section 4 may appeal in writing to the Chair within seven days of the decision. Where the Chair made the original decision, the appeal should be directed to a director who was not involved.
- Appeals will be reviewed by a person independent of the original decision. “Independent” for this purpose means a person with no prior involvement in the matter and no connection to any party – including no relationship with the Club as a parent, coach, or member at the time of the appeal.
- The outcome of an appeal is final within the Club’s internal processes. Nothing in this policy prevents any person from raising a matter with the IGA, a statutory body, or as required by law.

7. Confidentiality & Record-Keeping

- All complaints, investigations and outcomes will be treated confidentially and handled in accordance with the Club’s Data Protection Policy (BDGC 007) and UK GDPR.
- Records of formal complaints, investigations and decisions will be retained securely for a minimum of six years, or longer where required by law or governing body guidance.
- Where a complaint involves a child, records will be retained in accordance with safeguarding best practice and the Club’s Safeguarding Policy.

8. Compliance and Disciplinary Procedures

Any breach of this policy will be taken seriously and may lead to disciplinary action. In serious cases this could include summary dismissal under our disciplinary procedure. Any breach of this policy must be handled in accordance with all other relevant company policies within BDGC.

9. Monitoring Compliance

The adoption of this policy is subject to monitoring and auditing. The outcomes from these reviews will inform and improve practices as part of BDGC’s commitment to continual improvement.

10. Review

This Policy will be reviewed at least annually.

11. Amendment and Termination

This Policy can be amended, replaced, or terminated at any time at the sole discretion of BDGC. If you have any questions about whether you are reviewing the latest Policy, please confirm with the Owner of this document identified below.

Document Controls

Category	Description
Document Owner	Board of Directors
Status (Draft, Published, Retired)	Published

History

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0.1	Document conception	Chairman	31/08/26