

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Mersey Rose Recreational Cricket Club (MRRCC) is committed to providing a safe, positive, and enjoyable environment for all those we work with and everyone participating at our club. However, we understand that sometimes people we work with may have concerns they wish to raise. When this happens, it is important that clear procedures are in place that enable any concerns to be raised and resolved in a timely, professional and sensitive manner.

MRRCC is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity in cricket, and to ensuring that its employees, members and all other individuals working or volunteering for MRRCC, and participating in or watching MRRCC's activities, are treated fairly and are able to conduct their activities free from discrimination, harassment or intimidation.

This policy is fully supported by MRRCC's Management Committee, which is responsible for the implementation of this policy. MRRCC is committed to the investigation of any claims of discrimination, harassment, bullying, abuse or victimisation of an individual that may be brought to the club's attention. MRRCC reserves the right to impose such sanction as it considers appropriate and proportionate where such complaints are upheld, either fully or partially.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

MRRCC's complaints procedure is intended to help resolve problems and provide a means by which issues of concern can be raised and subsequently addressed. We would hope that effective two-way communication between MRRCC and complainants would enable most concerns to be addressed informally without the need for a complaint to be formally registered. All complainants will be treated respectfully during and after the course of any complaints investigation, and will receive a written response to any formal complaint.

Concerns relating to safeguarding issues should be raised with the club's safeguarding officer in the first instance. Anyone wishing to register a complaint in relation to safeguarding matters should consult the ECB's "Safe Hands" policy and, if necessary, the ECB Coaches Code of Conduct. For any complaints of a non-safeguarding nature, the procedure outlined below should be followed.

Step 1: Expression of concern

There may be instances where it may be preferable to resolve grievances on an informal basis without entering into formal disciplinary procedures. There are inevitably issues that sometimes arise which, if dealt with promptly and in a considerate manner, can be resolved without the need for a formal complaint. Any problem or concern should be raised promptly with the relevant MRRCC coach/captain in the first instance. Individuals who do not feel able to discuss the matter with the coach/captain, or whose concerns relate to non-playing issues, should discuss their concerns with the club secretary.

This first step is not mandatory and complainants are entitled to submit a formal complaint without firstly seeking informal resolution.

Step 2: Formal complaint

Formal procedures will be invoked if initial attempts to resolve the matter are unsuccessful and the person raising the issue remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further.

Details of a complaint will be kept confidential except in so far as they need to be shared with people who may contribute to their resolution, including those who may be the subject of any allegations.

It is the choice of the complainant whether to initiate a formal complaint. It should be noted that some outcomes of a complaint may lead to action being initiated under other formal procedures, such as the ECB Safe Hands policy.

A formal complaint should be made in writing. Providing the club with much information as possible will help inform an appropriate response and course of action. MRRCC must have a clear understanding of what the complaint is about and may therefore request detailed clarification before investigating.

Complaints should contain as much detail as possible, including specific information as to what occurred, when the occurrence took place, the names of individuals involved and details of witnesses. Where relevant, witness statements should be provided.

The club secretary will respond to all formal complaints in writing or by e-mail within five working days.

At this stage, the club secretary will investigate the complaint as well as attempting to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of all concerned. If the complaint is about the club secretary, another member of MRRCC's Management Committee will be appointed to oversee these processes.

Where complaints cannot be resolved by the club secretary, they will be referred to the Management Committee.

Step 3: Disciplinary Sub-Committee

Where a complaint is referred to the Management Committee, it will establish a sub-committee of no less than three people to consider the complaint. The panel will elect its own chair. A date for the meeting will be set by the club secretary within five working days of referral to the Management Committee.

The complainant will be given the opportunity to attend the meeting to make representations in person. The sub-committee will therefore meet at a time convenient to all parties. If the complainant decides not to attend the meeting, it may be held in their absence, and the complaint may be considered on the information available.

Any person requested to attend a Disciplinary Sub-Committee is entitled to be accompanied by a friend or other representative, and to call witnesses.

During the meeting, the complainant will be invited to explain the complaint. Panel members may ask questions of the complainant, and the complainant may ask questions of the panel. If the complaint is about an individual, they will also be entitled to attend the meeting and may similarly be questioned by the panel and have the right to ask questions of the panel.

The panel chair will explain that both parties will hear from the panel in writing or by e-mail within five working days. Both parties will leave the meeting while the Panel decides on the issues and reaches a conclusion.

Outcome of complaint

A response will be given outlining the outcome of the investigation and detailing how the conclusion has been reached.

The panel may reach the following conclusions:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- Recommend changes to MRRCC's internal procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The aim of the investigation will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the complainant and MRRCC. However, it is acknowledged that sometimes the complainant may not be satisfied with the outcome if matters are not found in their favour. It is also acknowledged that reconciliation may not be possible even if the complaint is upheld.

Appeals

Any appeal against the decision of the Complaints Panel should be made in writing or by e-mail to the club secretary within five working days of the date of the written notification. A new Complaints Panel, appointed by the Management Committee, will consider the complaint.

If the complainant is dissatisfied after the appeals stage, they may refer the case to an independent representative of the ECB or another body.

Complaints about the Management Committee

Complaints about the Management Committee should be directed to the club secretary who will seek an independent assessment of the complaint.

Complaints in relation to discrimination should be directed to the Lancashire Cricket Foundation.