



## **Carlisle United COMPLAINTS POLICY**

Where reference is made to Carlisle United this covers Carlisle United, the Academy Department, not the Community Sports Trust or Carlisle United Ladies which have their own safeguarding arrangements

### **Overview**

The Club strives to provide and maintain the highest standards. However, despite the best efforts of the staff we do understand that problems can occur.

We are thoroughly committed to the principle that all staff, customers, spectators, players and officials treat each other with respect and courtesy, irrespective of race, colour, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation or age. Only if we are given constructive feedback from our supporters can we develop any areas that you feel need to be improved.

If you feel that we have not met the high standard you deserve and expect, we would like to know about it, so that we can improve.

We encourage those who feels that they have been mistreated in any way to bring the matter to the attention of the Club, who can then attempt to address the issue to the best of their ability.

### **Policy Statement**

The Club welcomes comments and complaints from all members of the Club community and from supporters. We use this process to improve our services for stakeholders, fans and the wider community in which we exist.

CUFC is committed to the continuous improvement of the services it provides. We recognise that, occasionally, mistakes will be made or the service offered will not meet as individual's requirements or expectations. For these reasons it is Club policy that all complaints should be:

- Treated seriously and in an open and timely manner
- Acknowledged immediately, preferably in writing
- Investigated properly
- Resolved, wherever that is reasonably practicable, within no longer than 13 working weeks
- Used as feedback to improve the Club

No complainant bringing a complaint under this procedure will be treated less favourably by any member of staff. If there is evidence to the contrary, the member of staff may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

### **Scope**

The policy applies to all members of the Club but does not replace procedures for, staff grievances and disciplinary action: those procedures should be used where appropriate. The Human Rights Act 1998 applies to the operation of this policy.

### **Safeguarding**

**Complaints and concern of a safeguarding nature should be reported to the Safeguarding Team. Also refer to the Club's Whistleblowing policy for raising issues**

### **Matchday**

The Club staff will conduct themselves in a courteous manner at all times.

Our staff will promote the match day experience as a safe, fun and community orientated event which encourages people of all ages to attend and give us their support.

### **Responsibilities**

All Club Staff have a responsibility for receiving complaints, treating them seriously and dealing with them promptly and courteously in accordance with the procedure set out below.

Any match day issues should be raised with the Ticket Office employee at the Match Day Ticket Office in the West Stand, or a member of the match day safety team as soon as they arise. The sooner we are aware of any problems that are occurring, the sooner we can deal with them.



If you feel that your issue on match day was not correctly resolved, or if you would like to discuss something unrelated to a match day please contact us.

General enquiries response times may vary due to the high volume of calls, particularly when match tickets go on sale. Any complaints or general enquiries are initially channelled into our general enquiries telephone line 01228 526237 and then will be routed to the relevant department if the enquiries line is not able to give a satisfactory answer.

The Club will endeavour to answer your complaint as soon as possible. However, due to many staff members not being based at the Club and others just working on the day of a fixture it is not always possible for us to get in touch with you straight away.

Heads of Department have a responsibility for resolving a complaint, and leading or contributing to an investigation into a complaint when this is considered appropriate.

The CEO is responsible for resolving complaints which have not been resolved. The decision made by the CEO is final.

The 1921 Board is responsible for ensuring that the complaints policy and procedure are operating effectively and may become directly involved if a complaint is directed against the CEO or a director of 1921.

The Holdings Board is responsible for ensuring the 1921 Board undertakes its role properly and may become directly involved if a complaint is directed against the 1921 board.

## **Dealing with complaints**

### **Stage 1**

The Club expects complaints to be made informally to a member of staff in the first instance. The Club will then forward to the relevant member of staff. Where this does not result in satisfactory resolution, the complaint should be submitted in writing to the Club.

The Club usually expects complaints to be made by the person concerned. However it will consider complaints made by a parent or advocate. Anonymous complaints cannot be investigated.

### **Stage 2**

It is the Club's policy to respond within a maximum of seven working days and this will be done either by telephone, email or letter explaining what has happened as a result of the complaint.

Where this involves a member of staff, specific detail of action taken will not be made available.

This is to ensure that our employees are afforded appropriate dignity at work.

If it is not possible to provide a full response at that time, an acknowledgement will be sent and a detailed reply will follow within 21 working days of receipt of the original communication.

### **Stage 3**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the relevant manager's response then the complaint will be forwarded to a senior member of staff to resolve.

The senior manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within two working weeks and a final reply will be completed within 8 working weeks to allow time for any formal investigations to take place.

### **Stage 4**

If the complainant is still dissatisfied with the response, then the matter will be referred to the CEO. The CEO will respond within three weeks. The CEO's decision is final.

The total comments/complaints procedure should be finalised in no more than 13 working weeks unless there are exceptional circumstances in which case the complainant will be kept informed of progress.



## **Complaints against the CEO or 1921**

Complaints against the CEO should be addressed to the Chairman of the Holdings Board at the Club. Complaints against 1921 should also be addressed to the Chairman of the Holdings Board at the Club.

If the matter is still not resolved you can contact:

The Independent Football Ombudsman  
Suite 49  
57 Great George Street  
Leeds LS1 3AJ

## **Review**

This Policy will be kept up to date, particularly as the Club changes in nature and size and new requirements emerge.

To ensure this, the Policy, and the way it is implemented, will be reassessed and amended on an ongoing basis and reviewed annual basis will be as follows:

- Complaints of a Safeguarding nature will be considered as agenda items and discussed at the:
  - Safeguarding Working Group meetings
  - Academy Management Team meeting and Technical Board meetings
- The Policy will be reassessed and amended on an ongoing basis by the CEO in consultation with the Safeguarding Working Group
- The 1921 Board will:
  - include Complaints within Safeguarding as an agenda item and feature in the Board Report
  - conduct an annual review of the Policy as part of the annual review
  - publish the Policy on its website
- The Holdings Board will ensure the 1921 Board undertakes its role as stated

## **Safeguarding contacts**

Remember that in an emergency or where there is risk to life you should contact the police immediately.

If you have concerns you wish to raise with the Club please contact:

- Senior Safeguarding Manager Nigel Clibbens [nigel.clibbens@carlisleunited.co.uk](mailto:nigel.clibbens@carlisleunited.co.uk)
- Designated Safeguarding Officer David Wilkes [dave.wilkes@carlisleunited.co.uk](mailto:dave.wilkes@carlisleunited.co.uk)  
07940483680
- Matchday Safeguarding Officer Sarah McKnight [sarah.mcknight@carlisleunited.co.uk](mailto:sarah.mcknight@carlisleunited.co.uk)  
0330 094 5930

## **Other Safeguarding contacts in football:**

Whilst any safeguarding concern should be raised with the Club Safeguarding contacts in the first instance we recognise that this may not always be possible or appropriate. Below are the contact details for footballing partners with whom safeguarding concerns in relation to the Club can be discussed:

### **The English Football League Safeguarding Team**

Tel: 01772 325940 Email: [safeguarding@efl.com](mailto:safeguarding@efl.com)

If they concern regards a person in employed in footballs conduct towards a child:

### **The FA Safeguarding Team**

Tel: 0800 169 1863 Email: [Safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@TheFA.com)



## Mental health


Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of us all. Players and staff who are struggling under the current circumstances should contact the Club safeguarding staff as outlined above. Support can also be accessed through a number of national organisations including:

- The Samaritans Tel: 116 123 <https://www.samaritans.org>
- ChildLine: Tel: 0800 1111 <https://www.childline.org.uk>
- NSPCC: Tel: 0808 800 5000 <https://www.nspcc.org.uk>
- Mind: Tel: 0300 123 3393 <https://www.mind.org.uk>
- PFA: Tel: 07500 000 777 <https://www.thepfa.com/wellbeing>

## Online safety:

It is important that both players and parents are aware of the help and support available should they be concerned about something they have seen or experienced online. These include

- UK Safer Internet Centre <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>
- CEOP <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>
- Internet Matters <https://www.internetmatters.org/>
- NetAware <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>
- ParentInfo <https://parentinfo.org/>
- ThinkuKnow <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

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