



LARKHALL ATHLETIC YOUTH FC



GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH BREACHES OF CONDUCT

The Conduct section of the Club handbook explains that the club will not tolerate breaches of the various club Codes of Conduct, including the following – whether the breaches occur at matches, training sessions or any other club event (e.g. social event) and whether they involve players, officials or parents/carers:

- ▶ **Rudeness** (whether to club officials, referees, team mates, the opposition or their supporters)
- ▶ **Racist, bad or foul language** (again irrespective of who it is aimed at)
- ▶ **Bad sportsmanship** (e.g. refusing to shake hands after matches, openly disagreeing with referees' decisions, spitting at people)
- ▶ **Deliberate and serious foul play** (e.g. deliberately kicking out at an opponent, or hitting someone)
- ▶ **Any form of vandalism or theft**
- ▶ **Any form of physical or verbal bullying, harassment or exclusion** (including negative criticism of team-mates, by saying such things as "You're rubbish!")

If players commit any of the above in a match they are liable – even as young children – to be sent off or booked by a referee, in accordance with the Football Association's rules. However, even if a player is not booked or sent off they will still be liable to disciplinary action within the club.

The circumstances surrounding incidents of poor behaviour or breaches of conduct will never be exactly the same from case to case. For this reason and because of the importance of dealing with incidents in a demonstrably fair, open and appropriate way, taking account of the relative seriousness of the behaviour concerned, the club adopts the following procedural guidelines.

In all cases involving serious misbehaviour or serious breaches of codes of conduct (i.e. incidents that could result in a suspension or expulsion from the club according to the table of likely penalties below), the circumstances and an appropriate penalty will be considered and decided by the club's Welfare and Discipline Committee. This committee is chaired by the LAYFC Chairperson (or the LAYFC Deputy Chairperson when necessary) and attended by: the Club Welfare Officer, the relevant Year Group Leader(s) and relevant Coach(es)

The Committee will decide on appropriate penalties on the basis of a majority vote if needs be (with the Chairperson having a casting vote). However, before taking any action on a breach or alleged breach, one or more members of Committee would meet with the person concerned (and if the person concerned was a player, with their parent/carer) to confirm his or her view of the circumstances. Where appropriate (e.g. in a bullying situation), the views and preferred resolution of the situation would be sought from the victim of the bullying (and their parent/carer if the victim was a player).

An incident involving a breach of conduct may come to the attention of the Committee through personal observation, or as a result of a complaint. Irrespective of how an actual or alleged breach is brought to the attention of the Committee, the Committee will aim to consider the breach and make a decision on it within two weeks of observation or reporting of the incident.

The following table indicates the penalties to which players, officials and parents/carers will be liable in relevant situations, with the penalties escalating from "time out" from a match or training session, to progressively longer suspensions from training and/or matches to expulsion from the club. However, the club reserves the right to immediately expel from the club, without prior warning, any player, official or parent/carer judged by the Welfare and Discipline Committee to have behaved in such a way as to amount to gross misconduct (e.g. fighting or theft).

POTENTIAL PENALTIES			
Nature of behaviour or incident	Minor and infrequent occurrences	Persistent and/or serious occurrences	Chronic and severe disruption
Disruption of training (e.g. by not listening to instructions or distracting others)	Player asked to “sit out” for a period of time by the coach	Player suspended from training for one or more sessions and their parent/carer would receive a written warning as to the player’s future conduct.	In cases such as this, the club would have no option but to ask the player to leave the club, for the sake of the enjoyment and development of all the other players

POTENTIAL PENALTIES		
Nature of behaviour or incident	Minor and/or infrequent occurrences	Persistent and/or serious occurrences
Rudeness, bad or foul language	In cases where the rudeness is not extreme (e.g. not involving “four letter words”), players will be asked to sit out for a time by the coach, or taken off the pitch if playing a match. In any cases involving adults, it is hoped that those concerned would be able to resolve the situation amicably, with any appropriate apologies offered. However, the club complaints procedure can be invoked by anyone if they feel it appropriate.	In more serious cases, players would be liable to suspension for one or more training session and/or match and their parent/carer would receive a written warning as to the player’s future conduct. The player would also be expected to apologise for their actions. Repeated serious breaches could lead to expulsion from the club. In persistent and/or serious cases involving officials or parents/carers, those concerned would be liable to suspension for one or more training session and/or match, with a written warning as to future conduct. Repeated serious breaches could lead to expulsion from the club
Bad sportsmanship	In certain cases (e.g. after a heavy defeat!) some young players will find it difficult to control their feelings and display good sportsmanship. In such cases (where for instance they may not want to shake hands with the other team at the end of a match), the need to always show good sportsmanship will be stressed to the player concerned, but he or she will not be disciplined.	However, the club would expect the player to be more sporting the next time similar circumstances arose and would ask a player to miss a match if they showed persistently bad sportsmanship. A written warning would also be issued as to future conduct. In cases of serious bad sportsmanship (e.g. spitting, arguing vociferously with referees or spectators), the player would be taken out of the match or training session, and would be liable to suspension for one or more future training session and/or match and their parent/carer would receive a written warning as to the player’s future conduct. The player would also be expected to apologise for their actions. Repeated serious breaches could lead to expulsion from the club.

<i>Nature of behaviour or incident</i>	<i>POTENTIAL PENALTIES</i>
Racist language or behaviour	<p>The club will not tolerate racist language or behaviour by players, officials or parents/carer and will treat any such language or behaviour very seriously.</p> <p>Dependant on the exact circumstances, the potential penalties will range from a formal warning (with notice of such warning given to the relevant parents/carers in the case of a player), to suspension from training and/or playing for one or more session/match, to – in extreme circumstances – immediate expulsion from the club.</p>
Deliberate and serious foul play	<p>Fouls often occur in football, but young children usually do not mean to foul or hurt each other. In cases when fouls are accidental, then clearly there is no need to take any disciplinary action.</p> <p>However, if a player deliberately kicked or hit another player (even in retaliation), they would taken out of the match/training session (if not sent off), and would be liable to suspension for one or more future training session and/or match and their parent/carer would receive a written warning as to the player's future conduct. The player would also be expected to apologise for their actions.</p> <p>If any player were ever engaged in extreme foul play or persistent serious foul play, they would be liable to immediate expulsion from the club.</p>
Vandalism or theft	<p>Dependant on the exact circumstances and the nature and extent of the incident, the potential penalties will range from a formal warning (with notice of such warning given to the relevant parents/carers in the case of a player), to suspension from training and/or playing for one or more session/match, to – in extreme circumstances – immediate expulsion from the club.</p>
Bullying or harassment	<p>The club will not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment (whether physical or verbal) by players, officials or parents/carer and will treat any such behaviour very seriously.</p> <p>Dependant on the exact circumstances, the potential penalties will range from a formal warning (with notice of such warning given to the relevant parents/carers in the case of a player), to suspension from training and/or playing for one or more session/match, to – in extreme circumstances – immediate expulsion from the club.</p>