



Grimsby Town FC

Academy Complaints Policy

Season 2026-27

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Overview

Grimsby Town Academy 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 an individual's requirements or expectations.

For these reasons it is Club policy that all complaints should be:

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

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.

Definition of a concern or complaint

A concern or complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Grimsby Town Academy.

Method of complaint

Mechanisms in which a concern or complaint could be raised within the Academy:

- Face to Face, informal complaints to staff.
- Complaints reported to staff via letters, email, texts, group chat.
- Staff observe or overhear concerns or complaints from players and parents.
- Player and parent Wufoo feedback twice per season, including Ask it Basket.
- Exit survey/ feedback.
- ILP reviews and assessment with staff.
- Scholarship decision meetings feedback.
- PPAG minutes meeting from parent members.
- Staff appraisals.
- LFE Regional Officer.

Concern or complaint procedure

Concerns and complaints can be presented to staff formally, or informally, and both need to be considered and taken seriously, to prevent an informal complaint developing into a formal complaint.

In most cases the 'Coaching Staff' (e.g., U9s Team Coach) or the individuals delivering the coaching, physiotherapist, or player care session, may often receive the first approach regarding complaints.

Sometimes staff may be able to resolve some basic 'football related' issues on the spot, by recognising an error and apologising (without prejudice) where necessary may result in a swift and satisfactory resolution. Remember there is a process of 24 hour cool off period post-match for people to interact with staff.



The outcome of which should be shared with the case lead who will escalate the concern or complaint should they feel the need. However, all concerns or complaints must be directed to the senior member of staff as per this policy.

Stage 1

If a concern or complaint has been made, to a member of staff in writing and or verbally, a member of staff will contact the complainant to gain greater clarification of the situation or in some cases it may be that a parent wishes to request a meeting with a senior member of staff. Any such request should be made directly via the Academy Manager, preferably in writing. (Academy Manager - N.Woods@gtfc.co.uk) The request will need to include sufficient details of the concern or complaint, to allow the Academy Manager to decide whether a meeting is necessary, who should be asked to attend the meeting and to make any necessary preparations prior to the meeting.

If the concern or complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond prior to the meeting (ideally within one week).

Stage 2

The acknowledgement of any concern or complaint should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaint's procedure should be attached. Ideally, complainants should receive a reply within one working week and a definitive reply **within 4 weeks**. If not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Stage 3

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Academy Manager's response, then the complaint will be forwarded to another member of the Club Senior Management 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 Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will respond within **3 working weeks**. The Chief Executive'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. Such exceptional circumstances include staff absences at the end of the season.

Anonymous complaints cannot be investigated. If the complainant is still not satisfied, they are advised to approach the EFL or LFE dependent upon the nature of the complaint. Any person, player or parent may make an informal or formal safeguarding complaint at any time.

A concern would be classed as safeguarding when it relates to either:

- A child or adult at risk who is suffering, or is likely to suffer, abuse, neglect, exploitation or significant harm.
- A concern in relation to a member of Club staff abusing or causing harm either physically or emotionally to a child or adult at risk within their care.

All safeguarding Complaints should go to either Academy DSO (Academy DSO - Oliver@gtfc.co.uk) or the Academy Manager (Academy Manager - N.Woods@gtfc.co.uk), all staff must record all concerns



on the reporting platform and follow the safeguarding referral process identified through induction and Clubs Safeguarding Policy.

The club will refer any child protection concerns to the appropriate statutory agencies and football authorities, allegations, or disclosures, regardless of the timescale of receipt of the information. Historical allegations of child abuse must be referred to the Police.

Resolving a concern or complaint

When resolving concerns and complaints, staff will keep in mind ways in which a concern or complaint can be resolved in as timely and effective manner as possible. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part.

In addition it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following responses:

- ☐ An apology,
- ☐ An explanation,
- ☐ An admission that the situation could have been handled differently,
- ☐ An assurance that the event complained of will not happen again,
- ☐ An explanation of the steps that have or are to be taken to ensure that it will not happen again,
- ☐ An undertaking to review club policies in light of the complaint.

The process used and all associated details and outcomes must be recorded and communicated to all appropriate parties including the Academy Management Team and Technical Board.

Quality Assurance

All concerns and complaints will be reviewed and discussed at Academy Management Meetings or Technical Board; outcomes will inform the quality improvement process.