



YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK

IN THE DISCIPLINE PROCESS

It's vital to remember to treat children as children, this takes priority over the requirements of discipline matters. Throughout this document, the terms Young People, Children and U18s are all used to mean the same thing – they all refer to anyone under the age of 18. The adaptations outlined in this document must be applied to ensure U18s are treated appropriately.

These procedures should also be applied as necessary to any adults at risk who are involved in the discipline process. The application will depend on the needs of the adult, determined on a case-by-case basis.

GENERAL POINTS

A child under 12, at the time of the offence, cannot be charged with misconduct. An alternative to formal disciplinary action could be considered, for example the Welfare Officer discussing the behaviour with the child.

Any U18s involved in the discipline process, either as witnesses or alleged offenders, should be supported and assisted throughout by the Club Welfare Officer or other appropriate adult. The adult should be able to explain the process to them.

U18s cannot be fined. Any monetary penalties relating to conduct by an U18 are the responsibility of their Club, and cannot be passed on to the child. This also applies to any U18s acting as Coaches or Match Officials.

YOUNG PEOPLE AT DISCIPLINE HEARINGS

A child under 12 cannot appear at a hearing under any circumstances. Alternative arrangements can be made if the evidence from the child is crucial, for example a Welfare Officer can take a statement from the child, and then attend the hearing on behalf of the child to answer any questions.

A child aged 12 to 15 can only attend a hearing in the following limited circumstances:

- The evidence is considered sufficiently important to necessitate the attendance of the child.
- The child must only attend via video link, not in-person.
- The child must be accompanied by an appropriate adult.
- The adaptations to the hearing process (outlined below) must be strictly followed.

A child aged 16 to 17 has the option of attending a hearing either via video link or in person (if the hearing is being held in person). They must be accompanied by an appropriate adult and the adaptations to the hearing process (outlined below) must be strictly followed.

ADAPTIONS TO THE HEARING PROCESS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

- Only essential personnel can be present – the Commission, secretary, charged participant and their representative.
- Only the Chair of the Commission can ask questions of the young person.
- No questioning is permitted from any other individuals. If the charged participant has questions for a witness aged U18, they must be submitted in writing prior to the hearing. The Chair will ask the questions if they are necessary and relevant.
- At the end of the initial questioning, the charged participant is given an opportunity to state if they have any further questions (yes/no only).
- Any further questions must be provided to the Chair privately, usually via the secretary. They must not be provided in the presence of the young person. Again, the Chair will only ask any additional questions if they are necessary and relevant.
- The young person should leave the hearing at the conclusion of questioning. The only exception to this is if the young person is the individual who has been charged.