



Biggleswade Rugby Football Club Disciplinary Policy

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the RFU Disciplinary Regulations

It is the Club's responsibility to deal with any act of indiscipline on the field of play by players, and/or any of their supporters and spectators on the touch line, or any club member who at any time uses threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour towards any appointed official, other member or visitor to the club or in any way brings the club or the game into disrepute; such behaviour is deemed to include that which is displayed or communicated through the use of technology including hardware, software, e-mail, telephone, voicemail, internet and other communication platforms such as social media. It is an RFU requirement for every club to appoint a Disciplinary Panel to deal with such incident. Any member, whether player/supporter/spectator will have a right to the Club appeals procedure following any penalty imposed. It must be recognised that bad behaviour, particularly violent, abusive, threatening, or discriminatory, is not in any way less serious because it occurs at a Rugby Club. Matters considered to be criminal may be referred to the Police.

Senior Players

The following outlines the procedure to be followed where an act of indiscipline has taken place: Red Cards

Red Cards

The Manager/Coach of the team concerned MUST report the name, contact detail and playing position of the player sent off, the match including the opposition and any relevant details to the Club Discipline Officer and Club Secretary within 24 hours of the sending off.

It is mandatory that the Club Secretary reports the incident to the East Midlands RFU County Discipline Secretary within 48 hours of the incident. Referees (Society or Club) officiating in adult games must submit a report for all players sent off to the Discipline Secretary of the County Constituent Body of the player's club on the RFU Discipline Report form.

The player will be suspended from play immediately.

A Club Discipline Panel shall be convened within 5 days of the match to consider the circumstances. The player is expected to attend. After considering all available information the panel shall decide on an appropriate sanction as detailed below

- Issue a sanction in line with RFU Policy which outlines the various entry points based on the scale and seriousness of the player's conduct.
- No further punishment additional to the punishment of sending off
- To take no action but to leave the matter to the County Discipline Sub Committee

Yellow Cards

Any player who has been sin binned an excessive number of times (RFU recommendation of 6 yellow cards) shall be called before a discipline Panel.

Undetected Foul Play

Any member/player who witnesses an act of foul play or bad behaviour by a player of any club team not detected by the Referee/Match Officials can report the incident to the Club Secretary as soon after the incident as possible so consideration and action can be taken if appropriate.

Any member/player who witnesses an act of bad behaviour at any time by any Club Member, or visitor to the club, of whatever age, can report the matter to any member of the Club Committee so the appropriate action can be taken.

Player Appeals

If a player appeals a hearing, they are responsible for any costs which MUST be paid by the individual concerned. The club will therefore invoice the player for the said amount. Failure to pay the club will result in the player being banned from playing any further matches or use any club facilities until the levy is paid in full.

Junior/Youth Players

The Club also has a duty to deal with all Junior Discipline matters, Junior being a player under the age of 18 at the time of the offence, providing the player is playing in an U17 or U18 club match. Any player who has reached their 17th birthday and is playing in either an U19 (Colts) or adult match is classed as an adult and will therefore be dealt with under the procedure outlined Red Card

Red Cards

In the case of Junior Players, the coach or manager of the relevant team MUST report the incident to the Club Secretary and Junior Chairperson within 24 hours of the incident.

The player will be suspended from play immediately. The Club Secretary should receive the Referee's Report before he or she takes any further action. However, the lack of a referee's report should not prevent a case being heard, nor should it delay the case by more than 72 hours, as delays in proceedings should be kept to an absolute minimum.

Yellow Cards

A record of players who have been sin binned will be kept by the Junior Chairman. Any player who has been sin binned more than six times in a season will be asked to appear before a Junior Discipline Committee chaired by the Junior Chairperson

Members General Conduct

In the event of it being alleged that any Club Member has acted in breach of any of the Club Rules, Constitution or Codes of Conduct, or has acted in a manner prejudicial to the interests of Biggleswade Rugby, the Chairman shall arrange for the allegation to be investigated by a member of the Committee. Any complaint should be forwarded to a member of the committee within 72 hours from the alleged incident. There may be exceptions where this is not possible, and any such occurrences will be

considered on an individual basis. Where necessary advice on proceeding with a complaint may be sought from a Constitutional Body (East Mids/RFU).

Suspension

The Executive Committee retain the right to suspend (without prejudice) an individual whilst a complaint is investigated. The individual shall be informed in writing of the suspension and the circumstances behind it. Where an investigation is prolonged individual should be updated as to the progress of 14 days.

Disciplinary Process

If after initial investigation conducted by a committee member there appears to be substance to the allegation, a Disciplinary Panel will be formed to consider the allegation and adjudicate on it. The Member against whom the allegation is made will be given the opportunity to appear before the Panel and give evidence or make representation. If, on the balance of probabilities, the Panel is satisfied that the allegation is proven, they are empowered to impose such penalties as detailed below

Sanctions

- Club Member
 - Issue a caution as to their future conduct with timescales in place
 - Issue a period of suspension from taking part in the administration of the club
 - Issue a suspension of attending matches/social events or attending club premises with timescales in place
 - Make a Recommendation to the committee that the individual's membership is withdrawn

The Discipline Panel

The Discipline Panel will be responsible for investigating and taking action on any sending off, or any incident of foul play or bad behaviour by a Biggleswade Club Player.

The Discipline Panel will also investigate and take action on any instance of indiscipline, bad behaviour, acts in breach of any of the Club Rules, Codes of Conduct, Constitution or acts prejudicial to the interests of Biggleswade Rugby Club by any Biggleswade Rugby Club Member, supporter or spectator.

The Discipline Panel will exercise such power in a fair and open manner with the accused always having a right to attend and put their case after being given reasonable notice of the hearing and to exercise its power without prejudice.

The Discipline Panel shall consist of

The Club Chairman • The Treasurer • The Hon Secretary

Any hearing must be heard by the Discipline Panel where possible within seven days of the act of indiscipline, offence or incident in question (subject to the conclusion of any ongoing investigation and submission of final report). Should any of the panel not be available the chairman will appoint deputy/s. The reported player/member is expected to attend the discipline hearing and they may be accompanied by one person of their choice. The Panel may also receive evidence (either verbally or in writing) from any other person(s) who witnessed the incident or was involved in it.

If the respondent fails to turn up to the hearing the Panel will make a decision founded on the available evidence to hand at that time.

A record of any penalty awarded against any player/member will be kept on file. This penalty can be taken into account when deciding any future penalties at any subsequent discipline hearing relating to that member.

Right of Appeal

Members against whom an allegation has been proven shall have the right to appeal against the findings. The appeal shall be heard by an Appeal Panel comprising of least two people appointed for the purpose by the Chairman of the Club, none of whom shall have served on the original Panel and who have not been involved in the alleged incident or the investigation. Those eligible to sit on the Appeal Panel may include Committee members of Biggleswade Rugby Club and/or any other full member of the Club appointed for this specific purpose by the Chairman.

Notice of any such appeal shall be provided to the Club Chairman within 7 days of the date on which the written notification of the decision of the Discipline Panel was given. Any penalties imposed by the Discipline Sub-Committee will be suspended pending the determination of the appeal

The Appeal Panel shall afford to the member against whom the allegation was found the opportunity to appear before the Appeal Panel and provide evidence or make representations to it.

The Appeal Panel are given the power to confirm, vary, increase or set aside the decision of any penalties imposed by the original Discipline Panel

A member who fails or who refuses to adhere to a Panels decision shall automatically be suspended from membership of Biggleswade Rugby and denied all the membership benefits until the penalties are adhered to.