



## **Stratford Hockey Club - Ethics, Values and Disciplinary Policy**

Stratford Hockey Club (SHC) expects officials, players and volunteers of the club to act and demonstrate respectful values and actions. It adopts the England Hockey Code of Ethics and Behaviour Policy including:

- Equality Policy
- Anti-doping Rules
- Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Hockey Policy and Procedures and Good Practice Guidelines.

This document seeks to clarify rules and expectations over and above any playing regulations issued by the relevant governing bodies, such as the England Hockey Association and Sport England.

### **General:**

The club considers itself as a “family” club and does not accept any interpersonal intolerance whatsoever.

Any behavior that is suspected of violating any national or international laws or Sport England regulations shall result in the club notifying the relevant authorities.

### **Members holding positions of responsibility:**

- No member shall personally profit by holding a position of responsibility (including but not limited to a Committee Member, Captain or Coach).
- Under no circumstances shall a member induce or accept payment or incentive from another member or external organisation to further the agenda or requirements of that party.
- Any member involved in a decision-making process on behalf of the club shall formally notify the club committee of any involvement or relationship that may be considered or give rise to a conflict of interest.
- All captains shall implement the instructions and decisions of the elected committee.

### **Conduct and Behavior of Players:**

- All players shall behave in a respectful manner and in the “fair play” spirit of hockey.
- No member of SHC shall seek to intimidate or incentivize an official or member of another club in any manner whatsoever, either directly or indirectly.
- No player shall demonstrate violent behavior or conduct or shall deliberately seek to cause harm or injury to another player.
- All players shall respect the decision of the team captains/coaches in the selection of respective teams.
- Players are expected to acknowledge that the captain’s/coach’s decision is absolute and final on all playing and disciplinary matters during a match.
- Players shall accept the decision of the umpires in all circumstances, in accordance with the rules of England Hockey.
- Members playing in teams or associated with junior members (under 18 years of age) are reminded of the England Hockey Safe Guarding Policy.

### **Disciplinary Offences:**

The following actions may give rise to the commencement of a disciplinary process. They are not exhaustive and also include the use of all communication and publication methods, including social media and WhatsApp.



- Actions contradictory to SHC Safe Guarding Policy
- Actions that arise in bringing SHC's reputation and image into disrepute, either directly or through association.
- Negligent or consciously unsafe behavior
- Disrespectful, degrading, intimidating or bullying, language or behavior towards another club member, a match official, a member of another club or member of the public.
- Violent conduct
- Exclusion from the field of play (red card)
- Persistent suspension from the field of play.
- Defiance of direct instructions of a designated club official responsible for upholding the club values and rules. (eg. Covid 19 Office, Captain )
- Deliberate failure or refusal to implement a sanction issued by the disciplinary committee.
- Any deliberate breach of the club's or Government's Covid regulations.

### **Disciplinary and Grievance Process:**

The disciplinary and grievance process is an impartial mechanism to investigate, review and decide a course of action that it is in the best interests of the club and the individuals involved.

The club will look to ensure that at all times:

- A full fair and rounded investigation shall take place.
- The outcome of an investigation will never be pre-judged.
- Only one investigating officer will conduct the investigation, where practical and appropriate.
- Any outcomes and sanctions will be explained personally.

### **Disciplinary Committee**

The disciplinary committee of SHC is comprised of the Committee, as defined by its constitution. However not all committee members are required to attend all hearings.

Any disciplinary matter involving contravention of the Safeguarding policy shall also include the Clubs' welfare office and the Lead Junior Coach.

The Vice Chairperson of the club shall be considered as a member of the disciplinary committee in the absence of, or as delegated by the Chairperson.

NOTE: Should it be considered that there could be an actual or perceived conflict of interest with the involvement of any of the Disciplinary Committee due to their involvement with an issue or through a personal relationship, then they shall not participate in the process. In this instance, another committee member, or the Vice Chairperson shall replace them.

The final decision on the composition of the disciplinary committee rests with the Chairperson (or in their absence, the Vice Chairperson.)

### **Representation:**

All members subject to disciplinary matters (known as Respondents) have the right to participate in a disciplinary hearing in person and may invite another club member to corroborate their version of events. As a member's clubs, SHC does not recognize any external legal representatives. A guardian or parent will be expected to be represent any junior member involved in disciplinary process.

### **Disciplinary Resolution Process:**

1. Where a complaint arises, the Chairperson or his/her delegate shall form an initial disciplinary committee, as per the guidance in this document within seven days of receiving the complaint.



2. The Sections Club Captain, or his/her delegate, shall act as the investigating officer.

NOTE: Should it be considered that there could be an actual or perceived conflict of interest with the involvement of any of the Disciplinary Committee due to their involvement with an issue or through a personal relationship, then they shall not participate in the process. In this instance they shall be replaced by another committee member, or the Vice Chairperson.

3. The Respondent shall be informed of an investigation being undertaken, both verbally and in writing by the Investigating Officer.
4. All parties will be interviewed by the Investigating Officer, including the Respondent.
5. The disciplinary committee shall convene, either in person or via other means of verbal communication within fourteen days of receiving the complaint.
6. The Respondent shall be informed of the outcome of the investigation and, if appropriate, the outcome. In all instances, a reason and an explanation will be provided.
7. A copy of the decision (and supporting information) will be forwarded to the club secretary.

In order that no proceeding or outcomes are compromised, SHC reserves the right to invoke a temporary suspension from the club with immediate effect to the individual(s) involved, without any pre-judgement or precedence whatsoever.

Furthermore, SHC reserves the right to invoke a temporary suspension from the club with immediate effect to the individual(s) involved, without any pre-judgement whatsoever, in the event that the incident gives rise to concern for safety or a potential escalation of the matter whilst an investigation is in progress.

This course of action would only be taken after a vote of all available committee members, with a majority decision determining the outcome. No committee member involved in the process will be allowed to vote.

**Disciplinary Committee (initial):**

The membership of the committee should be as follows:

- Either the Chairperson, Club Secretary or Club Treasurer.
- Either the Club Captain (Ladies or Mens)
- Where any individual Under 18 involved the following individuals should also be included:
  - Club Welfare Officer

\*The Vice Chairperson of the club shall be considered a member in the absence of, or as delegated by, the Chairman.

Where conduct has been determined to contravene the rules of SHC, then an appropriate sanction shall be agreed and communicated to the Respondent.



## Sanction

The Disciplinary Committee have used the England Hockey Red Card policy as a reference point for the SHC sanctions framework:

The minimum periods of suspension for the following offences shall be:

Unacceptable behaviour	Sanction
a) an isolated incident of non-physical disrespectful or degrading language or behavior	Reprimand
b) a pattern of incidents of non-physical disrespectful or degrading language or behavior	1 game suspension
c) an isolated incident of non-physical intimidating or bullying language or behavior	16-day suspension
d) i) an isolated incident of physically aggressive behavior	30-day suspension
d) ii) a pattern of non-physical intimidating or bullying language or behavior	30-day suspension
e) a pattern of physically aggressive behavior	60-day suspension

The above sanctions relate to club sanctions only and may be supplemented by any England Hockey or legal proceedings. In the event that either England Hockey or legal proceedings are initiated relating to incidents where a club disciplinary process would normally occur, the SHC disciplinary process shall be delayed until these have been concluded.

### Escalation Process:

Any proven disciplinary matter that would merit a sanction more serious than a temporary playing suspension of longer than 12 week shall escalate to a full disciplinary hearing. Furthermore, should the same incident be repeated within a period of 12 months by the Respondent, then a full disciplinary hearing shall also be convened.

Should the original investigation and subsequent deliberation of the process result without unanimous consensus on the outcome, the initial Disciplinary Committee shall disband and a full Disciplinary Hearing will be convened.

### Appeal:

Should a Respondent wish to appeal then, this must be received by the Club Secretary within three days of the original decision being communicated. A full disciplinary committee will then be convened.

The original disciplinary committee shall not take part in the appeals process, other than the individual designated as the Investigating Office. The Vice Chair will be available to participate in the appeals process if they did not take part in the original process.

### Full Disciplinary Hearing:

The minimum composition of the disciplinary committee to be considered as a quorum at a full hearing shall be four participants, comprising of at least:

- 2 of Club Captain (Men's and or Ladies), or Junior Chairperson.
- 2 of Chairperson (or Vice Chairperson if unavailable), Secretary or Treasurer.

Where any individual under 18 is involved in this process the Club Welfare Office should be included.



**Process:**

The process shall be the same as in the Disciplinary Resolution Process, with the following exceptions:

1. The disciplinary committee shall convene in person where feasible, though some may participate by other verbal means of communication.
2. The Respondents shall be expected to participate in the meeting in person. If the Respondent is under 18 years of age, then a parent or guardian should also be in attendance.
3. The Respondents shall be permitted to present their version of events and provide any mitigating circumstances directly to the disciplinary committee members.

**Appeal:**

The decision of a full disciplinary hearing is final. A Respondent has no right of appeal to the process.

**Decision:**

In the event that suspension or exclusion is considered appropriate, then the Respondent does not have the right to reclaim their membership fee for that season.