



FROME RFC

DISCIPLINARY & CONDUCT POLICY

1. Purpose of This Policy

The Club is responsible for dealing with any act of indiscipline on or off the field of play by players, supporters, and spectators, or any Club member who uses threatening or abusive language or inappropriate behaviour towards any other member or visitor to the Club, or in any way brings the Club or the game into disrepute. Any member—whether player, supporter, or spectator—has a right to the Club appeals procedure following any penalty imposed.

Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact Details
Discipline Secretary	Andrew Vince	07838 227 728
Director of Rugby (DOR)	Richard Maunder	Through club website
Club Safeguarding Officer	Celine Bush	07885 911 835
Minis & Juniors Chairman	Paul Durston	07717 773 109

2. Discipline Procedure

The following outlines the standard procedure to be followed whenever an act of indiscipline takes place across any section of the club:

2.1 Player Sent Off by Referee (Society or Club)

- **Senior Players:** The Captain or Team Manager (both hold joint responsibility) MUST report the name of the player sent off, the match including opposition details, and any relevant circumstances to the Discipline Secretary within 24 hours of the incident.
- **Youth Players (under 18):** The coach or manager of the relevant team MUST report the name and age of the player concerned, the referee's name and society (if any), opposition details, and match specifics to the Discipline Secretary within 24 hours of the incident.
- **County Notification:** It is mandatory that the Club Discipline Secretary reports any sending off in writing to the Somerset County Discipline Secretary within 72 hours of the incident.
- **Referee Reports:** Referees (Society or Club) must report all players sent off to the Discipline Secretary of the County Constituent Body on the official RFU Discipline Report form. For Club referees, copies are available from the Club Administrator.

2.2 Player Sin Binned (Yellow Cards)

The captain of the team (or their representative) must report the name of any player sin binned (shown a yellow card) during a game—relating to all teams and irrespective of whether a Society or Club referee officiates—to the Discipline Secretary at the selection committee meeting immediately following the match. If there is no representation from that team at the selection meeting, the captain must inform the Chairman of Selectors by telephone.

A central record of yellow cards will be maintained by the Director of Rugby (DOR). Any player who, in the opinion of the Discipline Sub-Committee, accumulates an excessive number of yellow cards may be summoned to appear before the Sub-Committee to explain their conduct.

2.3 Acts of Foul Play Not Detected by Match Officials

- **Internal Reporting:** Any member or player who witnesses an act of foul play or bad behaviour by a Frome RFC player may report the incident (including names and details) to the Discipline Secretary within 24 hours.
- **Opposition Incidents:** Any foul play involving an opposition player witnessed by a Frome RFC member/player can be reported to the Discipline Secretary without delay for evaluation.
- **Citing Procedures:** A formal Citing may only occur where an act of foul play was not detected by match officials. Citing can only be lodged by Unions, Constituent Bodies, Clubs, or Referee Advisors (not individual spectators/players). Any consideration for a Citing must be reported to the Club Discipline Secretary immediately due to strict RFU deadlines.
-

2.4 Bad Behaviour by Members, Spectators or Visitors

Any member or player who witnesses bad behaviour at any time by any Club member, supporter, or visitor of any age can report the matter to the Club Discipline Secretary. In all cases, the Discipline Secretary will refer the matter for investigation and action by the Disciplinary Committee. In extreme cases, the Disciplinary Committee may recommend further action to be taken by the General Committee.

3. The Discipline Sub-Committee

The Discipline Sub-Committee is responsible for investigating and taking action on any sending off, undetected foul play, excessive yellow cards, or acts of indiscipline by members, supporters, or spectators.

The Committee exercises its powers in a fair, transparent, and unprejudiced manner. The accused party maintains the right to attend the hearing, receive reasonable prior notice, and present their case.

3.1 Sub-Committee Composition & Attendance

- **Committee Structure:** The Sub-Committee consists of three members appointed by the General Committee, including a chairman who is a member of the General Committee.
- **Sectional Representation:** In cases involving youth players, a Youth Section representative has the right to attend in an advisory capacity. In cases involving female players, a Ladies Section representative holds the right to attend in an advisory capacity.
- **Attendance & Representation:** The reported individual MUST attend the discipline hearing and may be accompanied/represented by one person of their choice. The Committee may also receive verbal or written evidence from witnesses.

3.2 Hearing Participants & Order of Proceedings

Those present at a discipline hearing shall include: (1) The reported player/member, (2) Their chosen representative, (3) Incident witnesses, and (4) Discipline Sub-Committee members.

- **1. Incident Report:** The report of the incident is formally read to the meeting.

- **2. Statement:** The player, member, supporter, or spectator is invited to make their statement.
- **3. Video Evidence:** Video evidence may be presented (the presenter is responsible for providing appropriate playback technology).
- **4. Witnesses:** Witnesses present their statements, followed by character witness statements.
- **5. Questions:** Committee members question those present regarding the incident.
- **6. Findings:** The meeting adjourns for the Committee to deliberate, then reconvenes to announce findings and any penalties.

3.3 Penalties & Sanctions

The Club Discipline Sub-Committee holds the power to impose one or more of the following sanction options:

- **a.** No further punishment additional to the match sending off.
- **b.** Take no internal action, referring the matter entirely to the County Discipline Sub-Committee.
- **c.** Issue a formal caution or severe caution regarding future conduct.
- **d.** Impose a period of suspension from playing, club administration, or both.
- **e.** Suspend or terminate Club membership for a period deemed appropriate.
- **f.** Apply any other specific penalties or suspensions decided by the Sub-Committee.

A written record of all penalties awarded and the reasoning behind decisions is maintained on file for 3 years. This record may be taken into account in any future disciplinary proceedings involving the member within that timeframe.

4. Youth Discipline (Under 18s)

Frome RFC has a dedicated duty of care to deal with all Youth Discipline matters appropriately (youth defined as a player under the age of 18 at the time of the offence).

4.1 Reporting Procedures

- **18th Birthday Threshold:** If a youth player has reached their 18th birthday on the date of the incident, the matter is dealt with directly by the Constituent Body Discipline Committee.
- **Mandated Reporting:** Team coaches/managers MUST report sending-off details to the Youth Chairman and Club Administrator within 24 hours. The Discipline Sec must notify Somerset County within 72 hours.
- **Report Distribution:** For players under 18, referee reports should be copied to both the Club Discipline Sec and Youth Chairman on the official RFU Discipline Report form.

4.2 Youth Yellow Cards & Conduct

Coaches/managers must report any youth player yellow card to the Youth Discipline Chairman. Any youth player receiving two yellow cards in a season may be summoned to appear before the Discipline Sub-Committee.

4.3 Youth Sanctions & Safeguarding Support

The Discipline Sub-Committee may impose sanctions as outlined in Section 2.3 (a, c, d, e, f), strictly taking into account the player's age and context. Under-18 players are normally suspended for shorter durations than adults, adhering to recommended sanctions in Appendix 3 of the RFU Handbook.

CRITICAL MANDATE: All Youth Section Disciplinary Hearings **MUST** have the Club Safeguarding Officer(s) present to provide proper support and advocacy for the young person.

5. Appeals Procedure

5.1 Players Reported by Match Official

Any senior male, female, or youth player (who has reached their 18th birthday) reported by a match official has the right of appeal directly to the County Discipline Sub-Committee hearing. Members should note that Constituent Bodies charge an administrative fee for appeal hearings.

5.2 Non-Playing Members & Internal Club Matters

All other members, non-playing supporters, or youth players dealt with internally by the Club Discipline Sub-Committee (for offences not detected by match officials) have a right of appeal to the Frome RFC General Committee.

5.3 General Committee Appeals Process

The General Committee considers appeals and may establish an Appeal Sub-Committee (excluding any individuals who sat on the original hearing panel).

- **Submission:** Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Club Administrator stating full grounds within 7 days of the discipline hearing.
 - **Timeline:** The appeal will be considered at the General Committee meeting immediately following receipt, or by a convened Appeal Sub-Committee within 14 days.
 - **Outcome Options:** The Appeal Committee may uphold the original decision, increase or decrease any period of suspension, or annul the judgment completely.
-

6. Review & Compliance

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if RFU guidance changes. All players, supporters, coaches, or any club member must confirm they have read and understood this policy each season.