GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Ver 1.1 – Junior Membership Amendments July 2026

1. All concerns, allegations or reports of malpractice or abuse relating to the welfare of children or vulnerable adults will be recorded and responded to swiftly and appropriately in accordance with the Club's and England Athletics' safeguarding policy and procedures. The Welfare Officer shall be the lead Officer for all Members in the event of any safeguarding concerns. The Welfare Officer shall be the lead Officer for adult safeguarding concerns. The Junior Welfare Officer shall be the lead Club contact for safeguarding and welfare concerns involving Junior Members, working alongside the Club Welfare Officer and in accordance with UKA/England Athletics safeguarding procedures.

2. Any complaint, allegation or concern involving a Junior Member that is or may be of a safeguarding nature must not be dealt with solely as an ordinary grievance or disciplinary matter. It must be referred promptly to the Junior Welfare Officer or Club Welfare Officer and handled under the Club's safeguarding procedures and any applicable UKA/England Athletics procedures.

3. Where there is uncertainty about whether a matter involving a Junior Member is a safeguarding concern, the matter should be referred to the Junior Welfare Officer or Club Welfare Officer for advice before any disciplinary investigation proceeds.

4. Any complaints of misconduct (improper or unprofessional conduct) regarding the behaviour of Members or Officers shall be dealt with by the Club in accordance with its Grievance and Disciplinary process and must be presented in writing to the Secretary (and where the matter relates to the Secretary, the complaint must be submitted to the Welfare Officer).

5. Where a complaint is made by or concerns a Junior Member, the Junior Member's parent or legal guardian should normally be informed and involved as appropriate, unless doing so would create or increase a safeguarding risk or would be contrary to advice from the Junior Welfare Officer, Club Welfare Officer, UKA, England Athletics or a statutory agency.

   Unless exceptional circumstances apply, the Secretary will hear complaints within fourteen days of receiving a complaint. If the complaint is sufficiently evidenced, the Secretary will convene an extraordinary Committee meeting to hear and pass

judgment on the complaint. Committee members should be recused if they are involved in, or have any interest in, the complaint.

Where a disciplinary matter involves a Junior Member and is not being managed as a safeguarding case, the Committee must ensure that the process is age-appropriate and fair. The Junior Welfare Officer or another suitably independent welfare representative should advise on appropriate arrangements, provided they are not directly involved in the complaint and there is no conflict of interest.

The committee will decide the appropriate action. The power of the Committee, and any decisions handed down, and is unrestricted. Subject to rule 3 below, a decision of the Committee shall be final and conclusive.

Any action or sanction involving a Junior Member must be proportionate, age-appropriate and consistent with safeguarding obligations. The Committee may impose measures including additional supervision requirements, temporary restriction from specified activities, suspension or termination of membership where this is considered necessary and appropriate.

6. Any appeals must be received by the Secretary within 7 (seven) days of receiving the written decision and, if appropriate, the following appeals process will be followed. The Secretary will appoint 3 (three) Club Members (who have no direct or indirect interest/involvement in the matter) to sit on a disciplinary panel to review the decision, with the highest-ranking committee member available (usually Chair) allowed to represent the Committee's original decision. The panel has the power to deny, uphold, or amend any original sanction. For the avoidance of doubt, the severity of sanctions can both be increased or decreased by the disciplinary panel.

7. A Junior Member may be supported or represented in an appeal by their parent or legal guardian or, where appropriate, another suitable adult agreed by the Club. Any person sitting on an appeal panel must be independent of the original decision and any underlying safeguarding concern.

8. Any complaints of serious misconduct (including, without limitation, theft, doping violations, fraud, physical violence, safeguarding policy breaches, serious breach of applicable health and safety, gambling and/or ticketing regulations or any act or omission of the Member or Officer which in the opinion of Finch Coasters or England Athletics, acting reasonably, brings or is likely to bring the sport of athletics into disrepute) regarding the behaviour of Members or Officers shall be reported and dealt with by Finch Coasters or England Athletics in accordance with its relevant Disciplinary Procedures.

9. For the avoidance of doubt, serious misconduct may include breaches of the Club's safeguarding rules concerning Junior Members, including unauthorised private social-media contact between an adult member and a Junior Member outside their family, unauthorised photography or publication of images of Junior Members, or conduct that places a Junior Member at risk.

10. If a dispute arises between any Members or Officers of the Club about the validity or propriety of anything done by any Member or Officer under these Rules and the dispute cannot be resolved by agreement, the parties to the dispute must first try in good faith to settle the dispute by mediation before resorting to litigation.

Junior safeguarding and interim protective measures

Where a complaint or concern involving a Junior Member indicates a possible risk to safety or welfare, the Club may take immediate interim protective measures while the matter is considered. These may include restricting contact with Junior Members, restricting attendance at junior-approved sessions, suspension from specified Club activities, or other proportionate measures necessary to protect those involved.

Interim protective measures are precautionary and do not, by themselves, amount to a finding of misconduct.

The Club will preserve appropriate confidentiality and share information only with those who need it for safeguarding, disciplinary, legal or regulatory purposes. Nothing in this policy prevents or delays referral to UKA, England Athletics, the police, social care or another statutory agency where required or appropriate.