



Whistleblowing Procedure

Raising a Concern

Staff should raise concerns with the manager or owners. Concerns should be raised in writing and include:

- Reference to the fact that it is a whistle blowing disclosure
- The background and history of the concerns
- Names, dates and places (where possible)
- The reasons why the worker is particularly concerned about the situation.

Staff who feel unable to put the concern in writing, can telephone or meet either Cathy or Ann.

Responding to a Concern

In order to protect individuals, initial enquiries, (usually involving a meeting with the individual raising the concern), will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. Concerns or allegations that raise issues that fall within the scope of other policies/procedures, will be addressed under those procedures.

Some concerns may be resolved at this initial stage simply, by agreed action or an explanation regarding the concern, without the need for further investigation.

The action taken will depend on the nature of the concern. The matters raised will be investigated internally or in the case of a child protection allegation against a staff member:

- Advice will be sought from Social Care
- Ofsted will be notified
- The matter may be referred to the police if necessary

Support and Protection

'Blowing the whistle' can be difficult and stressful. The club will ensure that they do their best to protect the identity of the worker raising the concern and that he/she is not subjected to harassment or victimisation from others.

Investigation

The appropriate person/s will investigate the concerns thoroughly, ensuring that a written response can be provided **within ten working days**.

The response should include details of how the matter was investigated, conclusions drawn from the investigation, and whom to contact should the worker be unhappy with the response and wish to raise the matter.

If the investigation cannot be completed within the timescale above, the worker should receive a response that indicates:

- Progress to date;
- How the matter is being dealt with; and
- How long it will take to provide a final response.

Untrue Allegations

If a worker makes an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against that worker. If, however, there is clear evidence that a worker has made malicious or vexatious allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against that individual in accordance with the club's staff disciplinary procedure.

Unfounded Allegations

Following investigation, if an allegation is confirmed as unfounded this should be notified to the worker who raised the concern, who will be informed that the club deems the matter to be concluded and that it should not be raised again unless new evidence becomes available.