



Middleton Sports Club



Whistleblowing Policy

Middleton Sports Club is committed to developing a culture where it is safe and acceptable for all those involved in all sport to raise concerns about unacceptable practice and misconduct.

You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but you may not feel able to express your concerns out of a belief that this would be disloyal to friends or colleagues or you may fear harassment, victimisation or disadvantage.

Those involved in the sport must acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult it is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Home Office directives assures all involved in sport that they will be treated fairly and that all concerns will be properly considered. In cases where the suspicions prove to be unfounded, then no action will be taken against those who report their suspicions/ allegations provided they acted in good faith and without malicious intent.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects whistleblowers from victimisation, discipline or dismissal where they raise genuine concerns of misconduct or malpractice.

Reasons for Whistle Blowing

Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour:

- to prevent the problem worsening or widening
- to protect or reduce the risk to others
- to prevent becoming implicated yourself

What stops people from Whistle Blowing?

- Starting a chain of events which spirals
- Disrupting the work or training
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

Who do I tell?

The first person to whom you should report your suspicion or allegation is your Club Safeguarding Officer/s or other Club Official. If for any reason you cannot or do not wish to report to your Club Safeguarding Officer/s or Club Official, you should refer to your County Welfare Officer or Local Authority Child Protection team.

What happens next?

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries
- All concerns will be treated in confidence. During the process of investigating the matter, every effort will be made to keep the identity of those raising the concern unknown, except to the minimum number of individuals practicable
- Your Club Safeguarding Officer/s, relevant Regional or County Safeguarding Officer and all sporting authorities have a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith
- Malicious allegations may be considered a disciplinary offence

Safeguarding Whistle Blowing Procedures

Should suspicions be raised via a “tip off”, the person receiving the tip off should attempt to obtain the following information from the informant.

- Name, address and telephone number
- Names of individuals involved
- The manner of the alleged incident/s or circumstances
- Whether they will submit any evidence (if applicable)
- How they became aware of the nature of the allegation

You should not attempt to deal with any allegation or suspicion yourself, rather inform your Club Safeguarding Officer/s, other Club Official or your County Safeguarding Officer or the Local Authority Child Protection Team.

Specifically do not:

- Inform the person about whom the concern was raised
- Inform any other members, participants or employees
- Commence your own investigation
- Annotate or remove evidence
- Delay in reporting the suspicion

Also, do not assume:

- “all is well, otherwise it would have been spotted earlier”
- “it doesn’t matter” or “no harm will arise”
- “ignore it as it is not my responsibility”

Feedback

The amount of feedback relating to the issue will vary depending on the nature and result of the investigations. However, where possible, those who have raised concerns will be kept informed of the progress and eventual conclusion of investigations.