

2023 Issue 01

Bourne End Junior Sports Club

Child Protection Whistle
Blowing Policy



BEJSC Child Protection Whistle Blowing Policy

Purpose

To encourage individuals to feel confident in raising concerns about the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in sport.

To provide a method of raising concerns and to receive feedback on any action taken.

To ensure that individuals receive a response to their concerns and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied.

To reassure individuals that they will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for whistle blowing in good faith.

Scope

ALL those involved in activities carried out under the jurisdiction of BEJSC are covered by this policy.

Key Principles

The following important principles are contained within this policy:

- The code is complementary to BEJSC's Child Protection Policy and Procedures and its Code of Conduct;
- The Designated Director of BEJSC has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy;
- If a matter raised results in any disciplinary action, the BEJSC's disciplinary procedures will apply.

General Principles

Members, Leaders, volunteers and parents are often the first to realise that a child's welfare is under threat. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel speaking up would be too difficult to handle. It may be that they also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may be just a suspicion of poor practice.

BEJSC is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability. In line with that commitment individuals are encouraged, if they have any serious concerns about any aspect of a child's safety and welfare, to come forward and voice those concerns.

This policy makes it clear that individuals **can** raise a matter of concern without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. The policy is intended to

encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns **within** BEJSC rather than overlooking a problem or blowing the whistle outside.

It is in the interests of all concerned that disclosure of potential abuse or irregularities are dealt with properly, quickly and discreetly. This includes the interests of BEJSC, its employees, volunteers, all club members and any persons who are the subject of any complaint, as well as the person making the complaint.

Safeguards

BEJSC is committed to good practice and high standards and wants to be supportive of everyone within the club's community.

BEJSC recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal from those responsible for the alleged poor practice. If an individual believes what they are saying to be true, they should have nothing to fear because in reporting their concern they will be doing their duty to the child, young person or vulnerable adult concerned.

BEJSC will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect individuals when they raise a concern in good faith.

Any investigation of alleged poor practice will not influence or be influenced by any disciplinary procedures that already affect individuals.

Confidentiality

BEJSC will do its best to protect the identity of the whistle blower when they raise a concern and do not want their name to be disclosed. It must be appreciated that the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and the statement by the whistle blower may be required as part of the evidence. They will be given prior notice of this and a chance to discuss the consequences.

Support is available from the Designated Director.

Anonymous Allegations

This policy encourages the whistle blower to put their name to the allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful, but they will be considered (at the discretion of the Designated Director). In exercising this discretion, the factors taken into account would include:

- ① The seriousness of the issue raised;
- ① The credibility of the concern; and
- ① The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources or factual records.

Untrue Allegations

If an individual makes an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against them. If, however, it is established that they have made malicious or frivolous allegations, or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against them. In such cases the BEJSC disciplinary procedure will apply.

The Whistle Blowing Policy

The Whistle Blowing Policy should only be followed if the person raising the concern feels unable to follow the standard reporting procedures as set out in BEJSC's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

How to Raise a Concern

Individuals should raise the concern in the first instance with the Section Leader or club contact. Any written evidence should be marked "Private and Confidential". If you feel you have not received a satisfactory response to your concern, you should approach the Chairman of BEJSC or another Trustee.

Concerns may be made verbally or in writing to the Designated Director. The individual should set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible and the reasons why they are particularly concerned about the situation. The earlier the individual expresses the concern, the easier it is for someone to take action.

Although the whistle blower is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate to the Designated Director that there are sufficient grounds for their concern.

How will BEJSC Respond?

The action taken by BEJSC will depend on the nature of the concern. In all cases the matter will be referred to the Designated Director.

In order to protect individuals it is likely that the BEJSC Designated Director will conduct initial enquiries to assess whether an investigation is appropriate, and if so, what form it should take.

Receipt of the individual concern will be acknowledged immediately, or as soon as is practicable, giving an indication of how the matter will be dealt with if possible.

The amount of contact between the whistle blower and the Designated Director the issue will depend on the nature of the issue raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided. If necessary, further information may be sought from the whistle blower as part of the investigation.

When any meeting is arranged, the whistle blower has the right, if they so wish, to be accompanied by a friend or a person of their choice who is not involved in the matter to which the concern relates.

BEJSC will take steps to minimise any difficulties which individuals may experience as a result of raising a concern.

BEJSC accepts that the whistle blower needs to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. Subject to legal constraints, they will receive information about the outcomes of any investigations, and the action that is to be taken against those whose actions caused the concern. Also, if appropriate, what policy changes are to be made to minimise the possibility of a similar concern being raised in the future.

How the matter can be taken further?

This policy is intended to provide individuals with a way in which they can raise concerns about the safety and welfare of any child, young person or vulnerable adult involved in any activities under the jurisdiction of BEJSC.

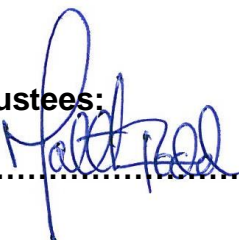
BEJSC hopes individuals will be satisfied that any child protection matter they raise has been considered properly. If they are not satisfied and they feel it is right to take the matter outside BEJSC they can contact:

- ☉ Bucks County Council Social Services via 01296 383962 or <https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/care-for-children-and-families/child-protection-and-safeguarding/>
- ☉ Thames Valley Police
- ☉ The NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000, or by email on help@nspcc.org.uk

If they do take the matter outside BEJSC, they will need to ensure they do not disclose prohibited confidential information protected by the GDPR regulations of 2018. They must check this before they make contact.

This policy was adopted on: Tuesday 19th July 2011 **(Date)**

& Reviewed on: 1st September 2022 **(Date)**

On behalf of the Trustees:
(Chairman).......... **(Signed)**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trustees