



Whistleblowing Policy (Football Section)



Contents

1	Introduction.....	3
2	Purpose.....	3
3	Definitions.....	3
4	Legislation and Regulation	3
5	What is Whistleblowing?	4
6	Policy Requirements and Standards	4
6.1	Club statement.....	4
6.2	Seeking guidance.....	5
6.3	Anonymity and confidentiality	5
6.4	Raising a concern	5
6.5	Investigating the concern	6
6.6	Investigation feedback	6
6.7	Untrue allegations	7
6.8	External Organisations	7



Whistleblowing Policy

1 Introduction

Bourne End Junior Sports & Recreational Club (BEJSC) Ltd is a Community Benefit Society registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, registration number RS009393, and provides sports and recreation facilities for adults and children within the local area. BEJSC is required to create and maintain policies which provide information on the club's approach to applicable legislation and regulation which impact club's activities.

2 Purpose

The aim of this policy is to provide information and awareness to club staff, volunteers, and any third-party persons, e.g. parents, about whistleblowing in so far as it relates to the safeguarding of children, and how the club will deal with concerns raised. This policy will confirm:

- applicable legislation and regulation (section 4)
- information about whistleblowing (sections 5)
- the steps involved in raising a concern and process (section 6)

3 Definitions

BEJSC	Bourne End Juniors Sports Club
FA	Football Association
LSO	League Safeguarding Officer
CWO	Club Welfare Officer
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
NSPCC	The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

4 Legislation and Regulation

The Department for Education (DfE) is responsible for child protection in England. It sets out policy, legislation and statutory guidance on how the child protection system should work. In England, child safeguarding legislation is covered by three main acts, as amended:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Social Work Act 2017



Together, these Acts provide the framework for child protection and safeguarding. BEJSC will adhere to requirements as applicable.

BEJSC is a community based sports club which provides grass roots football and as such must comply with applicable requirements set by the English Football Association. Whilst there is no legal requirement to create and maintain a Whistleblowing Policy the FA strongly recommends clubs demonstrate their commitment to safeguarding children by adopting a Whistleblowing Policy.

5 What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the act of raising a concern about wrongdoing, malpractice, or misconduct concerning the club, a club representative, a third party associated with club, or a third party with no direct association. Whistleblowing in the context of this Policy is the raising of concerns in relation to the welfare of any child who has an association with the club through the sporting activities it provides.

6 Policy Requirements and Standards

Individuals should read the following content fully so that they may understand whistleblowing and the steps involved in dealing with concerns.

6.1 Club statement

BEJSC takes the welfare of children seriously and aims to create spaces where children can enjoy sporting activities under the supervision of qualified and vetted coaches.

BEJSC requires all staff and volunteers to conduct themselves professionally when completing club activities. BEJSC has internal processes in place to prevent malpractice, misconduct, and wrongdoing. BEJSC also requires individuals e.g. parents to conduct themselves appropriately when attending or engaging in club activities. The club has a responsibility to report concerns to relevant organisations as and when appropriate to do so.

BEJSC is committed to operating an open and inclusive environment and encourages individuals to speak up with any concerns they may have without fear of reprisal and will treat concerns raised seriously and treat individuals raising concerns with dignity and respect.

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.



6.2 Seeking guidance

BEJSC encourages individuals to seek guidance prior to reporting a concern so that they may understand the process and requirements. Individuals may seek guidance from the club or external organisations listed in section 6.9. Individuals are advised not to share their concerns with other individuals e.g. other parents as this may prevent or hamper a thorough investigation.

6.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

BEJSC encourages individuals to put your name to any report you make. Concerns you raise without giving your name will be considered at the club's discretion but they are more difficult to investigate fully. The factors that the Nominated Officer will take into account in deciding whether to exercise their discretion to investigate concerns raised anonymously are:

- The seriousness of the issue raised
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of being able to validate the allegation.

BEJSC will do its best to protect the identity of the whistleblower 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.

6.4 What concerns should be raised?

Individuals should raise concerns in respect of the following main abuses:

- Neglect
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Domestic Abuse
- Online Abuse
- Bullying / Cyberbullying

6.5 Raising a concern

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.

Individuals should have reasonable grounds prior to reporting a concern but when ready can raise their concern in person verbally or in writing. Individuals should raise their concerns with the sport section leader in the first instance.

The CWO for the football section is Lynsey Brett who can be contacted at football-safeguarding@bejsc.co.uk or Liz Hutton who is the club's CWO and she may be contacted at office@bejsc.co.uk.

Individuals raising concerns should provide as much information as possible to enable a thorough investigation. Information should include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Names of persons involved
- Dates and times of events
- Locations of events
- Details of what happened
- Names of other persons who are aware of the events

6.6 Investigating the concern

BEJSC will investigate the concern upon receipt. The club will conduct meetings with affected persons with the aim of corroborating information provided. BEJSC may request further information from the individual raising the concern at any point during the process. There is no set time frame to complete an investigation as this is dependent on the information provided and complexity of the concern raised. The club's CWO upon completing the investigation will share details with the Board for their consideration and determination on a way forward. The investigation will be documented and retained in line with the club's privacy policy. BEJSC will immediately share validated concerns of a material nature e.g. the potential for immediate harm to a child with appropriate parties e.g. police, social services, etc.

6.7 Investigation feedback

BEJSC will, where possible, provide the individual raising the concern with feedback on the outcomes of the investigation with the aim of providing assurance that concerns have been properly addressed. However, in some circumstances this may not be possible e.g. due to legal constraints, or the duty of confidentiality to other parties involved. Feedback provided will be at the discretion of BEJSC.



BEJSC will, within their capacity, address concerns and or provide further assurance where an individual believes that the club's response does not address their concerns. Should an individual remain unsatisfied then they contact Matthew Tood who is the club's chairman.

6.8 Untrue allegations

BEJSC will, within its capacity and remit, complete an investigation to ascertain the facts concerning any concern brought to its attention. BEJSC will not take any against any individuals who have raised concerns in good faith, but where later confirmed through the investigation to be untrue or incorrect. However, BEJSC will act through its disciplinary procedures where concerns made by an individual were found to be malicious, frivolous or for personal gain.

6.9 External Organisations

BEJSC suggests that individuals raise their concerns with the club in the first instance so that an investigation and resolution can be completed accordingly. Individuals are though not prevented from raising their concern with external organisations prior or in conjunction. The following provides details of organisations who can be contacted.

- 1. Bucks and Berks FA**
Safeguarding Manager - Designated Safeguarding Officer
01235 544890
Safeguarding@Berks-BucksFA.com
- 2. English FA**
safeguarding@thefa.com
- 3. NSPCC**
0808 800 5000
help@NSPCC.org.uk
- 4. Buckinghamshire Children Partnership**
Local Authority Designated Officer
01296 382 070
secure-LADO@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
- 5. Thames Valley Police**
999 for emergencies
101 for non-emergencies