



COVENTRY CITY FOOTBALL CLUB LIMITED

Safeguarding Whistleblowing Policy

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#PUSB 

COVENTRY CITY FOOTBALL CLUB-SAFEGUARDING WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Introduction

COVENTRY CITY FOOTBALL CLUB ("CCFC", "the Club", "the Company") is committed to conducting our business with honesty and integrity and we expect all Staff and volunteers to maintain the same high standards. It is always possible, however, for things to go wrong or for organisations to unknowingly harbour illegal or unethical conduct.

The Club has a culture of openness and accountability, and this policy is intended to encourage staff to report any concerns or suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible, to provide guidance as to how to raise those concerns and to reassure staff that they are able to raise genuine concerns in good faith without fear of reprisals.

Although disclosure may be made to certain public authorities, it is the Club's policy that disclosures should be made in the first instance to the Club. We strongly recommend that you seek advice from the Club before reporting a concern to anyone external.

Purpose

This policy sets out how individuals can raise concerns about the safety and welfare of apprentices, children, young people, or Adults at Risk who participate or engage in any services and activities conducted under the name of Coventry City Football Club. It will provide a method of raising concerns and will detail how feedback may be received in relation to any action(s) taken.

The Club will aim to ensure that individuals:

- Get a response to their concerns.
- Are made aware of how to pursue the concern further if they are not satisfied with the response.
- Are reassured that individuals will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for whistle blowing in good faith.

Scope

Everyone involved in activity carried out under the jurisdiction of the Club is covered by this policy.

Policy Statement

Players, coaches, other employees, volunteers, officials, parents and/or team followers are often the first to recognise concerns which potentially compromise the

welfare or safety of those engaged in our activities of any age and those employed by the Club, including players. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be too difficult to handle. It may also be that they fear harassment or victimisation.

In these circumstances, it may be easier for them to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of poor practice. The Club would urge anyone to come forward and voice those concerns. If you have safeguarding or welfare concerns, doing nothing is never an option.

This policy details how 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** the Club rather than overlooking a problem or blowing the whistle outside.

You are also referred to the Club's SPEAK UP POLICY

It is in the interests of all concerned that disclosures of potential abuse or concerns are responded to and managed appropriately and without delay.

Safeguarding

The Club realise that raising a concern and reporting allegations is often difficult to do through fear of reprisals from those responsible for the alleged poor practice. This policy is designed to offer protection to anyone who raises a concern provided the disclosure is made:

- In good faith
- If the individual believes what they say to be true, and are not intending/attempting to be malicious, even if the concerns subsequently are proven unfounded

In these circumstances, the Club will fully support the whistle-blower and will not tolerate any bullying, harassment, or victimisation whatsoever. If this does occur any perpetrators will be dealt with under the Company's DISCIPLINARY POLICY and procedures (and as a result may face expulsion from the Club).

Confidentiality

The Club will do its utmost best to keep confidential the identity of a whistle-blower. Should any allegations be made through whistleblowing it should be noted that a statement may be needed to form part of the evidence.

Should the whistle-blower need to be identified for any reason or it becomes apparent that the whistle-blower will be identified because of any subsequent investigation, notice will be given to the whistle-blower, by a representative of the

Club (usually the Club's Head of Safeguarding ("**HOS**"), so that an opportunity is provided to discuss any likely consequences and support required.

Anonymous Allegations

This policy encourages individuals to put their name to any disclosures they make. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less credible and more difficult to investigate effectively, but they may be considered at the discretion of the Club. In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account will include:

- The seriousness of the issues raised, and any potential safeguarding risks indicated
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of confirming or clarifying the allegation from attributable sources
- Statutory agency advice e.g. LADO, Children's Social Care or the Police

If anybody feels unable to disclose their identity this policy seeks to encourage them to report any safeguarding concern in good faith and through external agencies such as the NSPCC Helpline (**0808 800 5000**) if necessary. Contact details for local statutory agencies and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) are set out in the Club's SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY.

The [NSPCC Helpline for Whistleblowing](#) can be contacted for support and advice by telephone (T: 0800 028 0285) or email (help@nspcc.org.uk)

Raising a Concern or Making an Allegation

Anyone wishing to raise a concern should do so either verbally or in writing to the Club's HOS. All staff are encouraged to speak to the HOS and raise the concern on the Club's Safeguarding portal, MyConcern.

The concern needs to be as specific as possible including any names, dates, and locations (where possible). The Club's Safeguarding team can be contacted through email: Safeguarding@ccfc.co.uk which is monitored 7 days a week, including public holidays.

The Club's SAFEGUARDING ORGANISATION CHART also provides the names and contact details of Safeguarding staff across the Club's sites.

Should any concerns or allegations be made, the Club would encourage the whistleblower to put their name to the allegation. Any anonymous concerns/allegations are much less powerful and are therefore much harder to investigate as outlined above but all concerns shared will be taken seriously and investigated where possible.

If, after the course of an investigation, it has been found that the concerns or allegations are untrue or have not been substantiated, then no action will be taken

against the whistle-blower. If, however, it is established that they have made malicious allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against them. In such cases, the Club's DISCIPLINARY POLICY and procedures will apply.

All investigations will initially be undertaken by the Club's Head of Safeguarding, HR and/or the Club's SSM. However, should you feel that you have not received a satisfactory response to your concern you can approach the following people or organisations:

- The FA Child Protection Team on 0207 745 4771 or by writing to The FA Case Manager, The Football Association, Wembley Stadium, Wembley, London, HA9 0WS
- **EFL Safeguarding Manager:** Alexandra Richards Tel: 07792 284740
Email: arichards@efl.com
- The FA/NSPCC Child Protection 24-Hour Helpline 0808 800 5000.
- Or by going directly to the Police and/or Social Services

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Review History

Number	Date	Review details	Authorised by:	Endorsed by Board
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2	Aug 19	Review and update	Sandra Garlick (HR)	Tim Fisher, Director
3	Nov 20	Review and update	Sandra Garlick(HR)	Tim Fisher, Director
4	Jan 22	Review and update	Sandra Garlick(HR)	Tim Fisher, Director
5	Aug 22	Review and update	Sandra Garlick(HR)	Tim Fisher, Director
6	Feb 23	Review and update	Sandra Garlick(HR)	Doug King, Director
7	Aug 23	Review and Update	Kirstie Patrick (HOS)	Doug King, Director
8	Jan 24	Review and update	Sandra Garlick(HR)	Doug King, Director

