



Whistleblowing Policy

(Safeguarding)

Date of policy: December 2019

The Policy Statement

Bristol City Football Club and Bristol City Foundation (together known as “Bristol City Football Club”) Bristol Bears, Bristol Women and Bristol Bears Foundation (together known as “Bristol City Rugby Club”), Bristol Flyers and Bristol Women’s Football Club. All of these organisations together with Ashton Gate and Bristol Sport and Bristol Foundation (collectively referred to as “the Company” within this policy) acknowledge the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This Policy outlines the procedures that the “Club” has put in place to allow individuals to 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 by the “Club”. It will also provide a method of raising concerns and will detail how feedback may be received in relation to any action(s) taken.

The “Club” is committed to conducting its business with honesty and integrity and expects all employees 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. This “Club” promotes a culture of openness and accountability and this policy is intended to:

- (i) encourage you to report any safeguarding concerns or suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible;
- (ii) provide guidance on how you can raise those concerns; and
- (iii) reassure you that you are able to raise genuine concerns in good faith without fear of reprisals.

Although you can make a disclosure to certain public authorities, the “Club” urges you to make any disclosures in the first instance to the “Club”. We strongly recommend that you seek advice from the “Club” before reporting a concern to anyone external.

The Principals of the policy

The “Club” will aim to ensure that individuals who 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 by the Club:

- get a response to their concerns;

- are made aware of how to pursue their concern further if they are not satisfied with the response; and
- are reassured that they will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for raising those concerns (whistle blowing) in good faith.

Individuals, including parents, players, coaches, other “Club” employees, volunteers, officials and / or team supporters are often the first to recognise concerns which potentially compromise the welfare or safety of those engaged in the “Club’s” activities. However, individuals may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up could be too difficult for them to handle or may cause them to be harassed or victimised.

In these circumstances it may be easier for individuals to ignore the concern rather than report it. However, the “Club” urges anyone to come forward and voice their concerns.

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. Doing nothing is not an option.

This policy details how individuals can raise concerns without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage and is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise their concerns within the “Club” rather than overlooking a concern.

It is in the interests of all concerned that disclosures of safeguarding concerns or allegations of potential poor practice or wrongdoing are responded to and managed appropriately and without delay.

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The “Club” realises that raising and reporting concerns is often difficult to do though fear of reprisals.

This policy is designed to offer protection to you if you raise a concern provided that your disclosure is made:

- in good faith; and
- you believe what you say to be true and you are being malicious.

The “Club” will support you if you whistle blow and will not tolerate any bullying, harassment or victimisation. If any bullying, harassment or victimisation does occur, the “Club” will deal with it according to the “Club’s” disciplinary policy and procedures.

Confidentiality

The “Club” will do its upmost best to keep your identity confidential if you make an allegation/disclosure. If you make an allegation in accordance with this Policy, you should note you may need to give a statement that maybe needed to form part of the evidence.

If you need to be identified for any reason or it becomes apparent that you may be identified because of any subsequent investigation, you will be given notice, by a “Club” representative (usually the Club’s Senior Safeguarding Officer) so that an opportunity is provided to discuss any likely consequences and support required.

Raising a concern or making an allegation

If you wish to raise a concern you should do so either in writing or by speaking to the "Club's" Senior Safeguarding Officer (SSO) or your Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). Your concern needs to be as specific as possible including any names, dates, times and locations (where possible).

You can **E-mail:** safeguarding@bristol-sport.co.uk or phone 07880140411.

If, after the course of an investigation, it has been found that your concerns or allegations are untrue or have not been substantiated then no action will be taken against you. If, however, it is established that you have made malicious allegations disciplinary action may be taken against you. In such cases, the "Club's" disciplinary policy and procedures will apply.

All investigations of a safeguarding nature will initially be undertaken by the Club's Senior Safeguarding Officer with support if necessary, from another member of the safeguarding team. However, should you feel that you have not received a satisfactory response to your concern you can approach the following people or organisations:

The Senior Safeguarding Officer for the "Club" is:

Maggie Martin Senior Safeguarding Officer 07880140411.

Other key contacts are:

BCFC Academy DSO Jen Owsley 07989771081

BCFC Foundation DSO Chris Stenner 07500116137

BC Women's DSO Rebecca Smith 07584770954

BB Academy DSO Gary Townsend 07572658449

BB Foundation DSO Craig Capel 07735285008

Flyers DSO Steve Devereux 07938035238

Flyers Foundation DSO Benjamin Breeze

Bristol City Foundation DSO Rob Webber

The English Football League Safeguarding Officer: Alex Richards, 01772325940

The Rugby Football League Safeguarding Officer: Colette Eden, 01132375046

Useful Contacts/Support

- NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000
- ChildLine 0800 1111 / www.childline.org.uk
- Kidscape www.kidscape.org.uk

- Anti-Bullying Alliance www.antibullyingalliance.org
- Contact the Ann Craft Trust safeguarding adult’s advice helpline by calling 0115 951 5400.

In an emergency or if someone is in immediate danger, call the Police on 999 (101 for non-emergencies).

Anonymous Allegations

You may raise a concern anonymously (without identifying yourself), but you should consider that a concern that is raised anonymously can be more difficult to deal with. The” Club “will make the decision to investigate a concern raised anonymously based on:

- the seriousness of the issue and any safeguarding risks;
- the credibility of proving the allegation(s); and
- advise from the local authorities.

If you feel unable to disclose who you are you can report any safeguarding concerns to such agencies as the NSPCC helpline **0808 800 5000**.

Further contacts are on the Club safeguarding website or safeguarding leaflets.

e-mail: help@nspcc.org.uk

Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Team each year, or sooner where new developments in guidance and legislation necessitate such a review, where factual clarification is required or changes to operational practices take place.

Date reviewed	Position
Dec 19	