

Whistleblowing Policy



Policy Statement

This policy is designed to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns within the organisation, without fear of reprisal or victimisation, in line with our commitment to integrity, safeguarding, and ethical conduct.

Whistleblowing refers to the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to our activities. This may include concerns about the behaviour of individuals, breaches of policy, or risks to children, adults, the public, or the organisation's reputation.

Concerns may relate to something that is happening now, has happened in the past, or is likely to happen in the future. Whistleblowing is distinct from grievances or complaints, which are typically personal in nature.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and stakeholders involved in our organisation.

Aims

- To ensure individuals understand their responsibilities and feel confident in raising concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- To provide clear avenues for reporting concerns and receiving feedback on any action taken.
- To reassure individuals that they will be protected from reprisals or victimisation when concerns are raised in good faith.
- To ensure all concerns are dealt with promptly, fairly, and confidentially.

What Should Be Reported?

Concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- Fraud, bribery, or money laundering.
- Criminal offences or miscarriages of justice.
- Breaches of laws, regulations, or organisational policies.
- Discrimination, abuse of position, or inappropriate behaviour.
- Risks to health and safety or the environment.
- Inappropriate treatment or care of children or adults.
- Misuse of organisational assets or decision making for personal gain.
- Tampering with documents or concealment of wrongdoing.

Reporting a Concern

Concerns should be raised as soon as possible. You do not need to prove the wrongdoing, but you must have a reasonable belief that it has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur.

You may report concerns to:

CEO – Hannah Simpson

Email: hannah.simpson@westridingfa.com

Tel: 0113 2821222

Chair – Barry Chaplin (if the concern involves the CEO)

Email: barrycasfa@aol.com

Tel: 07980 957287

If your concerns relate to a child, young person or vulnerable adult, you can direct your concern to:

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Paul Ratcliffe

Email: paul.ratcliffe@westridingfa.com

Tel: 01132821222

Alternatively, concerns may be raised with an independent whistleblowing helpline such as EXPOLINK (0800 374 199).

Whistleblowers can submit concerns anonymously via this link – [Whistleblowing/Complaint Form](#).

Investigation Process

Once a concern is raised:

- Initial enquiries will determine whether an investigation is appropriate and what form it should take.
- An independent senior member of staff will be appointed to investigate, supported by HR.
- The whistleblower will receive written acknowledgement within ten working days, along with information on next steps and support mechanisms.
- If necessary, the matter may be referred to external authorities (e.g. Police, Health and Safety Executive).

The whistleblower may be interviewed to ensure their disclosure is fully understood. Meetings can be arranged away from the workplace and individuals may be accompanied by a representative or friend.

Protection and Confidentiality

- All disclosures will be treated seriously and confidentially.
- Every effort will be made to protect the whistleblower's identity, unless disclosure is required by law.
- Individuals will not suffer detriment for raising concerns in good faith.
- Victimisation or retaliation against whistleblowers will be treated as a disciplinary offence.
- Malicious or false allegations made for personal gain may result in disciplinary action.

Escalation

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, you may escalate your concern to an appropriate external authority, such as:

- HM Revenue & Customs
- Financial Conduct Authority
- Health and Safety Executive
- Environment Agency
- Serious Fraud Office
- The Football Association
- NSPCC

Support

Support will be offered to any individual who experiences difficulties as a result of raising a concern. The organisation is committed to ensuring that whistleblowers feel safe, heard, and respected throughout the process.