 

WORLINGWORTH CRICKET CLUB

Whistleblowing Policy

Our club is committed to maintaining a culture where it is safe, and acceptable, for all those involved in cricket to raise concerns about unacceptable practice and misconduct. This policy provides information about whistleblowing - how to raise a concern about something you have seen, heard or noticed that worries you.

**Should you report your concern?**

Yes, you have a responsibility to report your concerns. You may be the first to recognise something is wrong, but you may not feel able to express your concerns out of a belief that this would be disloyal to colleagues, or you may fear harassment, victimisation or disadvantage. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember, it is often the most vulnerable children who are targeted. Although this can be difficult, it is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk to share your concerns.

**Commitment from the England Cricket Board**

The ECB assures all involved in cricket that they will be treated fairly and that all concerns will be properly considered. In cases where the suspicions prove to be unfounded, no action will be taken against those who report their suspicions/allegations, provided they acted in good faith and without malicious intent. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects whistle blowers from victimisation, discipline or dismissal where they raise genuine concerns of misconduct or malpractice.

**Why you should “whistle blow”**

Every individual involved with our Club has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour:

* To prevent the problem worsening or widening
* To protect or reduce risk to others
* To prevent becoming implicated yourself

Do not assume:

* “All is well, otherwise it would have been spotted earlier”
* “It doesn’t matter” or “no harm will arise”
* “Ignore it as it is not my responsibility”
* "Someone else must have reported it already"

**How to raise a concern**

You should normally report your concern or allegation to the Club Welfare Officer, Rob Bensly (Tel: 07795-140775). If for any reason you cannot, or do not wish to report the matter to your Club Welfare Officer, you should refer to your County Welfare Officer for Suffolk.

If you cannot, or do not wish to, report the information to either of these people, then contact the ECB Safeguarding Team by email on safeguarding@ecb.co.uk or telephone 020 7432 1200. Alternatively, you can contact Public Concern at Work on 020 7404 6609 or whistle@pcaw.org.uk

**What happens next?**

You will be asked to provide information about the nature of your concerns with any supporting evidence. It will then be for the Club Welfare Officer or County Welfare Officer to take the matter forward. The person receiving your report will want to confirm the following information:

* Your name address and telephone number
* Names of individuals involved
* The manner of the alleged incident/s or circumstances
* Whether you will submit any evidence (if applicable)
* How you became aware of the nature of the allegation

**Specifically, do not:**

* Inform the person about whom the concern was raised
* Inform any other members or participants
* Commence your own investigation
* Annotate or remove evidence
* Delay in reporting the suspicion

**Once you have provided your information**

All concerns will be treated in confidence. Your Club Welfare Officer, County Welfare Officer and the ECB have a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation. During the process of investigating the matter, every effort will be made to keep your identity confidential.

Where possible, you will be kept informed of the progress and conclusion of investigations, although you may not be informed of the detail unless you need this information in order to safeguard children.

No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith, however if there is evidence that you have made malicious allegations this may be considered a disciplinary offence

**Guidance for Club Officials who are approached with a tip off or an allegation**

If someone approaches a club official and wishes to raise a concern with them, the person receiving the “tip off” should attempt to obtain the following information from the informant:

* Name address and telephone number of the informant
* Names of individuals involved
* The manner of the alleged incident/s or circumstances
* Whether the informant will submit any evidence (if applicable)
* How the informant became aware of the nature of the allegation

You should not attempt to deal with any allegation or suspicion yourself, rather inform your Club Welfare Officer or your County Welfare Officer or the ECB Safeguarding Team as set out above. They will then take the matter forward following the procedure set out above.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Approved by Club AGM | 12 Feb 2023 |
| Review due date | By 12 Feb 2025 |