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**ALLSCOTT HEATH FOOTBALL CLUB**

**WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

**Purpose**

To encourage individuals to be confident in raising concerns about the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in football.

To provide a method or raising concerns and to receive feedback on any action taken.

To ensure that individuals receive a response to their concerns, and they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied.

To reassure individuals they will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for whistle blowing in good faith.

Whistleblowing can be used as an early warning system or when it is recognised that appropriate actions have not been taken. It is about revealing or raising concerns over misconduct or malpractice within an organisation. Any adult or young person with concerns about a colleague can also use whistle-blowing by contacting the FA Safeguarding team on **0800 169 1863** text **6300/6400** or email [safeguarding@theFA.com](mailto:safeguarding@theFA.com)

Alternatively, you can go direct to the police or children’s social care and report concerns there.

**Scope**

All those involved in activity conducted under the authority of Allscott Heath Football Club

We at Allscott Heath football club are fully committed to ensuring all FA guidelines are met, and the Health and Safety of our players is paramount and have a duty to represent the FA by example.

**Key Principles**

The following principles are contained withing this policy:

* The code is complementary to Allscott Heath FC Child Protection policy & procedures and its Code of Conduct.
* The CWO (Club Welfare Officer) has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy.
* If a matter raised results in any disciplinary action, the Allscott Heath Disciplinary procedures will apply.

**General principles**

Players, coaches, officials, parents, or team followers are often the first to realise that a child’s safety and welfare may be under threat. They may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be difficult to manage and they may 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. Allscott Heath FC is committed to openness, honesty, and accountability. In line with this commitment, individuals are encouraged, if they have serious concerns about any aspect of a child’s safety and welfare, to come forward and voice those concerns.

This policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise concerns within Allscott Heath FC rather than overlooking a problem or blowing the whistle outside. It is in the interest of all concerned that disclosure of potential abuse or irregularities are dealt with properly, quickly, and discreetly. This includes the interest of AHFC, all persons registered as members of AHFC and any persons who are the subject of any complaint, as well as the person making the complaint.

**Safeguards**

Allscott Heath FC recognises the decision to report a concern can be difficult 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 will be doing their duty to the child, young person or vulnerable adult concerned.

AHFC will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation and will take appropriate action to protect individuals when they raise a concern in good faith. Any investigation into allegations of alleged poor practice will not influence or be influenced by any disciplinary that already affect individuals.

**Confidentiality**

Allscott Heath FC will do its best to protect the identity of whistle blowers 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 a 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. Support is available from the club’ Welfare Officer.

**Anonymous Allegations**

This policy encourages the whistle blower to put their name on the allegation.

Concerns expressed are much less powerful, but they will be considered (at the discretion of the club’s CWO).

In exercising the discretion, the factors to be considered would include:

* The seriousness of the issues raised.
* The credibility of the issues raised.
* The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources or factual records

**Untrue allegations**

If an individual makes an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against them. If, however, it is established they have made malicious or frivolous allegations, or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against them. In such cases, AHFC disciplinary procedure will apply.

**How to raise a concern**

Concerns may be made verbally or in writing to the club’s Welfare Officer. The individual should set out the background and history of the concern, providing names, dates, and places where possible and the reason they are particularly concerned about the situation. The earlier the individual expresses concern, the easier it is for someone to act. Although the whistle blower is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate to the club’s Welfare Officer that there are sufficient grounds for their concerns.

Individuals should raise the concern in the first instance with the club’s Welfare Officer.

For any queries or concerns regarding child protection, please contact one of the following:

**AHFC Welfare Officer:**

Stuart Corns email: [stuallscottheathfc@outlook.com](mailto:stuallscottheathfc@outlook.com)

Mobile: 07792613293

**Shropshire FA:**

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) - Victoria Vespa- 01743 362769/ 07918764766

Email: [safeguarding@shropshirefa.com](mailto:safeguarding@shropshirefa.com)

Monday – Friday 9am-2.30pm

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer (DDSO) & Safeguarding Lead in the absence of the DSO

Andy Weston: 01743 362769

Email: [safeguarding@shropshirefa.com](mailto:safeguarding@shropshirefa.com)

Deputy Senior Safeguarding Lead (DSSL)

Zoe Griffiths- 01743 362769/07368528519

Email: [safeguarding@shropshirefa.com](mailto:safeguarding@shropshirefa.com)

Monday to Friday 9am-5pm

Updated by Cathy Jones on 28/07/2023