



Essex After School Clubs

Whistleblowing Policy

Whistleblowing procedure

There are existing procedures in place to enable staff to raise a grievance relating to their employment and procedures to ensure that the working environment is free from harassment and bullying. This policy is intended to cover concerns that fall outside the scope of these procedures. These include:

- ❖ Sexual, physical or verbal abuse of children, parents, staff or any other behaviour which a member of staff genuinely finds unacceptable or inappropriate;
- ❖ Inappropriate behaviour displayed by another member of staff eg; inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.
- ❖ Conduct which a member of staff may consider to be a criminal offence;
- ❖ Disclosure relating to miscarriage of justice;
- ❖ Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other staff;
- ❖ Possible fraud or corruption;
- ❖ Breaches of procedures
- ❖ Environmental risks
- ❖ Failure to comply with legal obligations;
- ❖ Other unethical conduct;
- ❖ The deliberate concealing of information relating to any of the above matters.

These procedures are in addition to any other statutory reporting procedures that may be applicable eg; Safeguarding children procedure.

Protection

This policy makes it clear that staff can speak up without fear of harassment, victimisation, discrimination or disadvantage. Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice will not influence or be influenced by any disciplinary or other procedures that already affect the member of staff. There will be no 'come back' if a member of staff reasonably believes that they have made a disclosure in good faith. However, if an allegation is made frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, then appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

Roles and responsibilities

We accept that the decision to report a concern can be very difficult and uncomfortable. The club is committed to supporting individuals through the process and protecting them from any 'come back', victimisation or harassment. Any concerns reported will be taken seriously and treated sensitively. Staff should acknowledge their responsibility to bring matters of concern to the Managers attention.

How to raise a concern

- ❖ You should raise your concerns as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a concern is expressed the sooner it is possible for action to be taken.
- ❖ Concerns should be reported to the Club Manager. If the allegation involves the Manager or if you feel you are unable to do this, then concerns should be reported to the Company Director, Kellie Rust, contact details: 07912 200255.
- ❖ Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing, in both instances you will be required to state the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible and the reasons for making the disclosure. This will make the investigation easier to complete.

Procedure

- ❖ The Club will respond to any concerns raised, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and what form it should take. The Club will decide whether the allegation falls within the scope of existing club procedures such as safeguarding children, conduct or discrimination issues and will therefore be considered with those procedures in mind.
- ❖ Safeguarding children allegations against staff concerns will not be investigated by the Club and will be referred immediately to **Havering Social Care MASH and Assessment Team**.
- ❖ If the Club decides not to proceed with an investigation then the decision will be fully explained to the person who made the allegation.
- ❖ The Club will decide whether to conduct the investigation internally or involve an external body based on the nature of the allegation.
- ❖ The Club will inform the person or persons against whom the allegation has been made of the investigation and the evidence supporting it. They will be given the opportunity to respond.
- ❖ The Club should compile a report that details the nature of the allegation, the evidence supporting it and the results of any investigation and disciplinary action.
- ❖ The individual who raised the concern will be informed of the outcome of any investigation.