

Whistleblowing Policy

Whistleblowing is the term used when a worker passes on information concerning wrongdoing.

At **Fun Fest** we expect all our colleagues, both internal and external, to always be professional and hold the welfare and safety of every child as their paramount objective.

We recognise that there may be occasions where this may not happen, and we have in place a procedure for staff to disclose any information that suggests children's welfare and safety may be at risk.

This policy should not be used to question business decisions made by the club, or to raise any matters that are covered under other policies (e.g. discrimination or racial harassment). Any allegations relating to child protection will follow the procedures set out in the **Safeguarding Children Policy**. Any concerns relating to the employment conditions of an individual member of staff should be raised according to the procedures set out in the **Staff Grievance Policy**. All staff will be made aware of these whistleblowing procedures as part of their safeguarding training and staff induction.

If a member of staff discovers evidence of malpractice or wrongdoing within the club, they **must** disclose this information internally without fear of reprisal. Our whistleblowing Policy is intended to cover concerns such as:

- Financial malpractice or fraud
- Failure to comply with legal obligation
- Dangers to health and safety or the environment
- Criminal activity
- Improper conduct or unethical behaviour

Concerns that qualify under the Whistleblowing Policy:

- A criminal offence (*has been, likely to be*) committed
- A miscarriage of justice has occurred, (*is, or is likely to*)
- An act creating risk to health and safety (*is, has or likely to endanger an individual*)
- An act causing damage to the environment (*has, is or likely to be damaged*)
- A breach of any other legal obligation (*e.g. EYFS, Equalities Act 2010*)
- Concealment of any of the above
- Any other unethical conduct
- An act that may be deemed as radicalised or a threat to national security
Is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act has the following rules for making a protected disclosure:

- You must believe it to be substantially true
- You must not act maliciously or make false allegations
- You must not seek any personal gain.

It is not necessary for the employee to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed; a reasonable belief is sufficient.

Raising a concern

Ideally, the staff member should put his or her allegations in writing, on a **Record of Allegation form**, setting out the background to the situation, giving names, dates and places where possible, and the reasons for their concerns.

Employees will suffer no detriment of any sort for making such a disclosure in accordance with this procedure.

In the First Instance, concerns should be made to the Club Manager. If, due to the nature of the concern, this is not possible, this should be raised with the Club Director

Club Director –Name_____ telephone number_____

If this is not possible, concerns should be raised with the Operations Regional Directors

Operations Director for the Midlands and the North

Emma Price– 0745 027498 or **Tina Iezekil- 07950 225506**

Operations Director for the South

Ryan Turner– 07788 309011

If they are unavailable

Sarah Charles – 0121 726 2595

If this person is unwilling or unable to act on the concern, the staff member should then raise it with:

- **Ofsted** (if it concerns the safe and effective running of the club)
- **The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** or the **Local safeguarding Partnership** (if it concerns a child protection issue not covered by the procedure set out in the clubs **Safeguarding Children Policy**)
- **The Police** (If a crime is thought to have been committed)

If the member of staff is still uncertain about how to proceed with the concern, he or she can contact the Whistle-blowing charity **Protect** for advice.

<https://www.protect-advice.org.uk>

Confidential whistle-blowing advice – 020 3117 2520

Responding to a concern

Initial enquiries will usually involve a meeting with the individual raising the concern, and decide whether an investigation is appropriate, and if so, what form it should take. If the issues fall under other club policies, it will be addressed under those policies.

If the initial meeting does not resolve the concern, then further investigation is required. The appropriate person will investigate the concerns thoroughly, ensuring that a written response can be provided **within ten days where feasible**, or if this is not possible, set a date in which the final response can be expected. The response should include details of how the matter was investigated, conclusions drawn from the investigation, and who to contact if the member of staff is unhappy with the response and wish to take the matter further.

Rights and responsibilities of the whistle-blower

All concerns will be treated in confidence, and the club will make every effort to not reveal the identity of anyone raising the concern in good faith. However, at the appropriate time, the member of staff may need to come forward as a witness.

If a member of staff raises a concern in good faith which is then not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against that person.

If the investigation concludes that the member of staff who raised the concern maliciously fabricated the allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against that person **in line with our Staff Disciplinary Policy**.

- *Qualifying disclosures made before 25 June 2013 must have been made 'in good faith' but when disclosed, did not necessarily have to have been made 'in the public interest.'*
- *Disclosures made after 25 June 2013 do not have to be made 'in good faith'; however, they must be made in the public interest. This is essential when assessing a disclosure made by an individual.*

Contact Numbers:

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)- Tel: _____
Children's Social Care Team Tel: _____ email _____
Ofsted- 0300 123 1231
Protect -020 3117 2520
website: <https://protect-advice.org.uk>

Related policies:

Staff Grievance Policy, Safeguarding Children Policy, Staff Disciplinary Policy

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the Club	Date for review
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10/06/2024	<i>Tina Iezekil</i> <i>Tina Iezekil 13/07/2025</i> <i>Tina Iezekil 1/9/25</i>	10/06/2025 Reviewed 13/07/2025 no changes Reviewed 1/9/2025 <i>Changes highlighted</i> Date for review 1/9/2026
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Written in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage(2025): Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements: Whistleblowing [3.7, 3.8]