



Whistleblowing Policy

(Safeguarding)

Date of policy: December 2019 renewed December 2020 Dec 2021 Dec 22
Dec 23 Dec 24

The Policy Statement

Bristol City Football Club, Bristol City Academy, PGA-ETC, and Bristol City Foundation (together known as “Bristol City Football Club”) Bristol Bears, Bristol Bears Academy, Bristol Women and Bristol Bears Foundation (together known as “Bristol City Rugby Club”), Bristol Flyers and Bristol Women’s Football Club. All of these organisations together with Ashton Gate and Bristol Sport and Bristol Foundation (collectively referred to as “the Company” within this policy) acknowledge the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This Policy outlines the procedures that “the Company” has put in place to allow individuals to raise concerns about the safety and welfare of apprentices, children, young people or adults at risk who participate or engage in any services and activities conducted by “the Company”. It will also provide a method of raising concerns and will detail how feedback may be received in relation to any action(s) taken.

“The Company” is committed to conducting its business with honesty and integrity and expects all employees and volunteers to maintain the same high standards. It is always possible, however, for things to go wrong or for organisations to unknowingly harbour illegal or unethical conduct. The “Company” promotes a culture of openness and accountability and this policy is intended to:

- (i) encourage you to report any safeguarding concerns or suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible;
- (ii) provide guidance on how you can raise those concerns; and
- (iii) reassure you that you are able to raise genuine concerns in good faith without fear of reprisals.

Although you can make a disclosure to certain public authorities, the “Club” urges you to make any disclosures in the first instance to “the Company”. We strongly recommend that you seek advice from “the Company” before reporting a concern to anyone external.

The Principals of the policy

“the Company” will aim to ensure that individuals who raise concerns about the safety and welfare of apprentices, children, young people or adults at risk who participate or engage in any services and activities conducted by the Company:

- get a response to their concerns;
- are made aware of how to pursue their concern further if they are not satisfied with the response; and
- are reassured that they will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for raising those concerns (whistle blowing) in good faith.

Individuals, including parents, players, coaches, other “Company” employees, volunteers, officials and / or team supporters are often the first to recognise concerns which potentially compromise the welfare or safety of those engaged in the “Company’s” activities. However, individuals may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up could be too difficult for them to handle or may cause them to be harassed or victimised.

In these circumstances it may be easier for individuals to ignore the concern rather than report it. However, “the Company” urges anyone to come forward and voice their concerns.

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. Doing nothing is not an option.

This policy details how individuals can raise concerns without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage and is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise their concerns within “the Company” rather than overlooking a concern.

It is in the interests of all concerned that disclosures of safeguarding concerns or allegations of potential poor practice or wrongdoing are responded to and managed appropriately and without delay.

Safeguarding

“The Company” realises that raising and reporting concerns is often difficult to do though fear of reprisals.

This policy is designed to offer protection to you if you raise a concern provided that your disclosure is made:

- in good faith; and
- you believe what you say to be true and you are not being malicious.

The “Company” will support you if you whistle blow and will not tolerate any bullying, harassment or victimisation. If any bullying, harassment or victimisation does occur, the “Company” will deal with it according to the “Company’s” disciplinary policy and procedures.

Confidentiality

“the Company” will do its utmost best to keep your identity confidential if you make an allegation/disclosure. If you make an allegation in accordance with this Policy, you should note you may need to give a statement that maybe needed to form part of the evidence.

If you need to be identified for any reason or it becomes apparent that you may be identified because of any subsequent investigation, you will be given notice, by a “Company” representative (usually the Company’s Senior Safeguarding Officer) so that an opportunity is provided to discuss any likely consequences and support required.

Raising a concern or making an allegation

If you wish to raise a concern you should do so either in writing or by speaking to the "Company's" Senior Safeguarding Officer (SSO) or your Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). Your concern needs to be as specific as possible including any names, dates, times and locations (where possible).

You can **E-mail:** safeguarding@bristol-sport.co.uk or phone 07880140411.

If, after the course of an investigation, it has been found that your concerns or allegations are untrue or have not been substantiated then no action will be taken against you. If, however, it is established that you have made malicious allegations disciplinary action may be taken against you. In such cases, the "Company's" disciplinary policy and procedures will apply.

All investigations of a safeguarding nature will initially be undertaken by "the Company's" Senior Safeguarding Officer with support if necessary, from another member of the safeguarding team. However, should you feel that you have not received a satisfactory response to your concern you can approach the following people or organisations:

The Senior Safeguarding Officer for "the Company" is:

Maggie Martin Senior Safeguarding Officer 07880140411.

Other key contacts are:

BCFC Academy DSO Jen Owsley 07989771081

BCFC Foundation DSO Burnadette Phippen 07469280347

BC Women's DSO Mark Humphrey 07786213684

BB Academy DSO Richard Berry 07917275090

BB Foundation DSO Craig Capel 07735285008

Flyers DSO Mike Edkins 07836383267

Bristol City Foundation DSO Lara Short 0117 963 0683

The English Football League Safeguarding Officer: Alex Richards, 01772325940

The Rugby Football League Safeguarding Officer: Viv Rymer, 02088317479

Useful Contacts/Support

- NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000
- ChildLine 0800 1111 / www.childline.org.uk
- Kidscape www.kidscape.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance www.antibullyingalliance.org

- Contact the Ann Craft Trust safeguarding adult's advice helpline by calling 0115 951 5400.

In an emergency or if someone is in immediate danger, call the Police on 999 (101 for non-emergencies).

Anonymous Allegations

You may raise a concern anonymously (without identifying yourself), but you should consider that a concern that is raised anonymously can be more difficult to deal with. "The Company" will make the decision to investigate a concern raised anonymously based on:

- the seriousness of the issue and any safeguarding risks;
- the credibility of proving the allegation(s); and
- advice from the local authorities.

If you feel unable to disclose who you are you can report any safeguarding concerns to such agencies as the NSPCC helpline **0800 800 5000**.

Further contacts are on "the Company" safeguarding website or safeguarding leaflets.

e-mail: help@nspcc.org.uk or refer using "My Voice" on Club website

Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Team each year, or sooner where new developments in guidance and legislation necessitate such a review, where factual clarification is required or changes to operational practices take place.

Date reviewed	Position	Owner
December 19	Executive Board	M. A. Martin
December 20	Executive Board	
December 21	Executive Board	
December 22	Executive Board	
December 23	Executive Board	