



Whistle Blowing Policy



Policy No AFHC WBP2021v1

WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

A member of the Hockey Family is often the first to realise that a young person's safety and welfare are under threat. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be too difficult to handle. It may also be that they 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. England Hockey is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability. In line with that commitment, individuals are encouraged, if they have serious concerns about any aspect of a young person's safety and welfare, to come forward and voice those concerns. This policy makes it clear that individuals can raise a matter of concern without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. The policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns within England Hockey 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 interests of England Hockey, its employees, all persons registered as members of England Hockey and any persons who are the subject of any complaint, as well as the person making the complaint.

If there is a concern with regard to the behaviour of an adult towards a young person, it is important that you share your concerns with the England Hockey Ethics and Compliance Manager. All information received and discussed will be treated in confidence and only shared with those individuals within England Hockey who will be able to manage and resolve the situation. On occasion it may be necessary to seek advice, or inform the statutory agencies e.g. Children's Social Care or the Police. All concerns will be taken seriously and managed according to the England Hockey Safeguarding Young People Policies and Procedures.

Approved: AFHC Committee 04/11/2021

Issued: 22/10/21

V1: 22/10/21



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How to Raise a Concern

Individuals should raise the concern first with the England Hockey Ethics and Compliance Manager on **01628 897500**.

or by post to

England Hockey, Bisham Abbey National Sports Centre, Marlow, Bucks, SL7 1RR (you should mark the envelope 'private and confidential')

Or email

safeguarding@englandhockey.co.uk

SAFEGUARDS

England Hockey is committed to good practice and high standards and wants to be supportive of everyone within the Hockey Family. England Hockey recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one 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 they will be doing their duty to the young person concerned. England Hockey will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect individuals when they raise a concern in good faith. Any investigation into allegations of poor practice will not influence or be influenced by any disciplinary procedures that already affect individuals unless there may be a pattern of poor practice/ abuse which requires the cases to be linked /dealt with together.

CONFIDENTIALITY

England Hockey will do its best to protect the identity of the whistleblower 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 whistleblower may be required as part of the evidence. They will be given prior notice of this and a chance to discuss the consequences.

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ANONYMOUS ALLEGATIONS

This policy encourages the whistleblower to put their name to their allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful, but they will be considered (at the discretion of the England Hockey Case Management Group). In exercising the discretion, the factors to be taken into account would include: • the seriousness of the issues raised; • the credibility of the concern; and • the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources or factual records.

UNFOUNDED 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 that they have made malicious or frivolous allegations, or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against them. In such cases, England Hockey's disciplinary procedure will apply.

USE OF THE WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

The whistle blowing policy should only be followed if the person raising the concern feels unable to follow the standard reporting procedures as set out in England Hockey's Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Hockey Policy and Procedures.