

Annfield Plain Cricket Club

Public Interest Disclosure (Whistle-Blowing) Policy and Procedure

Annfield Plain Cricket Club (The Club), is committed to developing a culture where it is safe and acceptable for all those involved in cricket to raise concerns about unacceptable practice and misconduct. You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but you may not feel able to express your concerns out of a belief that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment, victimisation or disadvantage. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember that it is often the most vulnerable children who are targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare. Those involved in the sport must acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult it is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk. The Club assures all involved in cricket that they will be treated fairly and that all concerns will be properly considered. In cases where the suspicions prove to be unfounded, then no action will be taken against those who report their suspicions/ allegations provided they acted in good faith and without malicious intent. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects whistleblowers from victimisation, discipline or dismissal where they raise genuine concerns of misconduct or malpractice.

Reasons for Whistle Blowing

Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour:

- to prevent the problem worsening or widening
- to protect or reduce risk to others
- to prevent becoming implicated yourself

What stops people from Whistle Blowing?

- Starting a chain of events which spirals
- Disrupting the work or training
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

What happens next?

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries
- All concerns will be treated in confidence. During the process of investigating the matter, every effort will be made to keep the identity of those raising the concern unknown, except to the minimum number of individuals practicable
- Your Club Welfare Officer, County Welfare Officer and the ECB have a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation

- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith
- Malicious allegations may be considered a disciplinary offence

Annfield Plain Cricket Club Safeguarding Whistle Blowing Procedures

Should suspicions be raised via a “tip off”, the person receiving the tip off should attempt to obtain the following information from the informant:

- Name, address and telephone number
- Names of individuals involved
- The manner of the alleged incident/s or circumstances
- Whether they will submit any evidence (if applicable)
- How they became aware of the nature of the allegation

You should not attempt to deal with any allegation or suspicion yourself, rather inform the Club Welfare Officer or the County Welfare Officer or the ECB Child Protection Team. Specifically do not:

- Inform the person about whom the concern was raised
- Inform any other members, participants or employees
- Commence your own investigation
- Annotate or remove evidence
- Delay in reporting the suspicion

Also do not assume

- “all is well, otherwise it would have been spotted earlier”
- “it doesn’t matter” or “no harm will arise”
- “ignore it as it is not my responsibility”

Who do I tell?

The first person to whom you should report your suspicion or allegation is the Club Welfare Officer. If for any reason you cannot or do not wish to report to the Club Welfare Officer, who is Stephen Black, you should refer to the County Welfare Officer, John Crockatt, whose telephone number is 0191 584 6299. If you cannot, or do not wish to report the information to either of these, then please contact the ECB Child Protection Team at Lords Cricket Ground by email on crb@ecb.co.uk or by telephone on 020 7432 1200. Alternatively you can also contact Public Concern at Work on 020 7404 6609 or whistle@pcaw.co.uk

Feedback

The amount of feedback relating to the issue will vary depending on the nature and result of the investigations. However, where possible, those who have raised concerns will be kept informed of the progress and eventual conclusion of investigations.