

PROUD
TO BE
TOWN



Whistleblowing Policy

Document Details

Author: Dave Riley
Created: 10/05/2021
Review Date: Annually (or sooner if required)

Document Control

Audience: Harrogate Town AFC
Document Version: 1.2
Issue Date: 01/07/2023
Prepared By: Richard Jones

Version	Date	Name	Comment
1.0	10/05/2021	Dave Riley	Document Created
1.1	01/07/2022	Richard Jones	Policy separated as per guidelines from previous audit
1.2	01/07/2023	Richard Jones	Reviewed from audit and signed off by Board and DSO

Harrogate Town AFC

Introduction

At Harrogate Town AFC we are dedicated to providing a safe learning environment for everyone who engages with us. We acknowledge that we have a duty of care to ensure that in all our activities, the participants welfare and safety is number one, and that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Harrogate Town Football Club and all its staff are here to support you as we all believe that your welfare, health and safety are important. Safeguarding is EVERYONES responsibility.

We will protect and respect the right of all under and over the age of 18.

You all have the right for Protection regardless of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity or religious beliefs.

The clubs Aim

Our Aim is to keep all children safe and provide a safe environment for you and every child on our activities where you will be treated fairly, and be free from harm, discrimination and Bullying.

Our staff are trained and understand the need to keep you safe whilst you are with us and to take action to prevent harm if we think you need protection.

What can you do?

To help us keep you and everyone else safe you are expected to:

- Listen and follow instructions
- Be Kind and support others
- Take responsibility of your actions
- Ask for help when you need it
- Respect other children and Adults
- Accept differences and value diversity
- Tell us what you like or don't like
- Never be rude, Bully or discriminate

Any misconduct will be dealt with by the Lead Coach / Section Leader

Your Voice

If you have a concern or want to give us some feedback, or talk to us about a concern you can speak to your DSO, SSM, or any other trusted adult within Harrogate Town Football club.

(4) Definitions of Abuse

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Physical abuse: Any deliberate act causing injury or trauma to another person, for example, hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, burning, giving a person medicine that they do not need and/or that may harm them or application of inappropriate restraint measures.

Emotional abuse: Any act or other treatment which may cause emotional damage and undermine a person's sense of well-being, including persistent criticism, denigration or putting unrealistic expectations on vulnerable groups, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation or use of threats.

Sexual abuse: Any act which results in the exploitation of children and adults at risk, whether with their consent or not, for the purpose of sexual or erotic gratification. This may be by an adult or by a young person who is intellectually, emotionally, physically or sexually more mature than the victim. This includes non-contact activities, such as indecent exposure, involving children or adults at risk in witnessing sexual acts, looking at sexual images/pornography or grooming them in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Whilst legally Children aged sixteen have reached the age of consent for sexual activity, it is unacceptable for any member of Staff to abuse their relationship of trust for sexual gratification.

Child sexual exploitation: A form of Child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or groups of people take advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a Child into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may be sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation can also take place through the use of technology.

Peer-on-peer abuse: Children and young people can be taken advantage of or harmed by adults and by other Children. Peer-on-peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between Children and within Children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate).

Neglect: Ongoing failure to meet the basic needs of children and/or adults at risk. Neglect may involve; failing to provide adequate food, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect them from physical and emotional harm or danger, or the failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of or unresponsiveness to, basic emotional needs.

In an Activity setting, it may involve failing to ensure that children and/or adults at risk are safe and adequately supervised or exposing them to unnecessary risks.

Grooming: Grooming is defined as developing the trust of an individual and/or their family for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking. Grooming can happen both online and in person.

Radicalisation: The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Anybody from any background can become radicalised. The grooming of children and/or adults at risk for the purposes of involvement in extremist activity is a serious safeguarding issue.

Female genital mutilation (FGM): Involves procedures that intentionally alter or injure female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure has no health benefits for girls and women. The Female Genital

Mutilation Act makes it illegal to practise FGM in the UK or to take girls who are British nationals or permanent residents of the UK abroad for FGM whether or not it is lawful in another country.

Bullying: Repeated behaviour intended to intimidate or upset someone and/or make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe, for example, name calling, exclusion or isolation, spreading rumours, embarrassing someone in public or in front of their peers, threatening to cause harm, physically Harming someone or damaging their possessions.

Cyberbullying: The use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, humiliate, spread rumours or target another person. By definition, it occurs among Children. When an adult is the victim, it may meet the definition of cyber harassment or cyberstalking.

Bullying as a result of any form of discrimination:

Bullying because of discrimination occurs when motivated by a prejudice against certain people or groups of people. This may be because of an individual's ethnic origin, colour, nationality, race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or disability. Actions may include unfair or less favourable treatment, culturally insensitive comments, insults and 'banter'.

Poor practice: This is behaviour that falls short of abuse but is nevertheless unacceptable. It is essential that poor practice is challenged and reported even where there is a belief that the motives of an individual are well meaning. Failure to challenge poor practice can lead to an environment where abuse is more likely to remain unnoticed. Incidents of poor practice occur when the needs of the child and/or adult at risk are not afforded the necessary priority compromising their welfare, for example, allowing

CONTENTS

1.0 Whistleblowing Policy	6
2.0 Appendices	8
2.1 - Raising Concerns Procedure	8
Sign off	9

1.0 Whistleblowing Policy

Policy statement: Whistleblowing is quite simply when an HTAFC staff member or volunteer reports suspected wrongdoing at HTAFC. Officially this is called 'making a disclosure in the public interest'. HTAFC understands that sometimes things go wrong. If they do, then we ask you to tell us.

Purpose: The purpose of this Whistleblowing Policy is to make it clear that HTAFC staff members or volunteers can whistleblow without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. This Whistleblowing Policy is therefore intended to encourage and enable everyone to raise serious concerns directly to HTAFC, rather than overlooking a problem or seeking a resolution of the problem outside of the organisation.

All HTAFC staff members and volunteers have a responsibility to maintain the highest standards of care towards everyone they come into contact with through their work with and for the organisation. This Whistleblowing Policy aims to ensure that serious concerns can be properly raised and addressed within the organisation and are recognised as a way of enabling the delivery of good practice - and which will help to ensure the protection of every child.

Responsibilities: HTAFC believes that all staff members and volunteers are professional and skilful in the work and tasks they undertake. However, occasionally it may be that a staff member or volunteer has concerns about another person's conduct or standards of practice **e.g.** they may be worried that a child is not being cared for properly; is being abused; or even at serious risk. It could be that they have concerns about fraud; financial irregularity; or other issues they have become aware of while working for HTAFC. All HTAFC staff members and volunteers have a responsibility to raise those concerns so that they can be resolved.

HTAFC acknowledges that raising concerns can be an extremely difficult and courageous thing to do. Any HTAFC staff member or volunteer who has good grounds on which to base their concerns - even if they do not have proof - will be listened to.

Please remember though, that it is not your responsibility to investigate the matter - this is HTAFC's responsibility.

Procedure for raising concerns: In most circumstances, staff members and volunteers wishing to raise their concerns, should ideally discuss the matter with their line manager. If this is not possible, perhaps because this person is thought to be involved or colluding in the suspected wrongdoing, another HTAFC manager or HTAFC's DSO or SSM should be contacted. The person that the staff member or volunteer raises their concerns to, will be responsible for ensuring the concerns are looked into or passed to the most appropriate person within HTAFC - in line with the organisations Disclosures in the Public Interest Policy contained in the Employee Handbook. Please see Appendix 1 for the Raising Concerns Procedure.

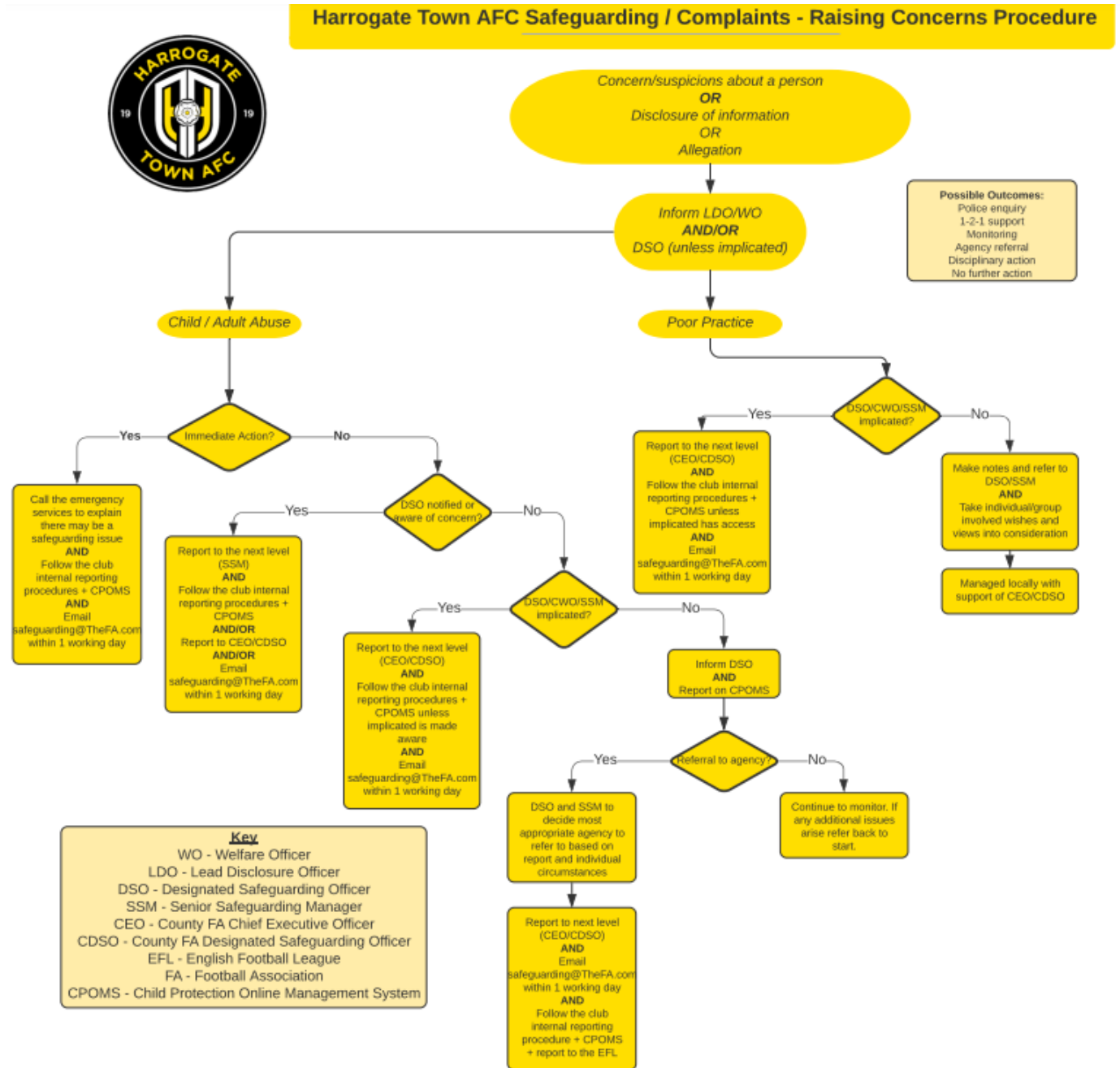
Follow-up: Depending on the nature of the concern raised, a response regarding the action taken will be supplied to the staff member or volunteer raising it as soon as possible. However, it is important to be aware that it might not always be appropriate to reveal the full extent of the investigation, where this relates to personal issues involving a third party.

Never keep quiet about wrongdoing: HTAFC staff members or volunteers - who do not report bad practice or abuse, neglect or ill treatment of a child, young person or adult, or for that matter anything else illegal that they are suspicious about - may be seen as colluding with that unacceptable practice. Such collusion constitutes a disciplinary offence and will be dealt with in accordance with the Company's disciplinary procedure (for staff) and resolving problems with volunteers procedure (for volunteers) and could result in the termination of the working relationship - as well as the information being forwarded to the appropriate authorities.

False and/or malicious allegations: No HTAFC staff member or volunteer will ever be penalised for whistleblowing - even if it is not upheld - unless they made a false accusation which they knew was both untrue and made with malice. If it is found that a false accusation was knowingly made, this would be treated as gross misconduct in accordance with the Company's disciplinary procedure (for staff) and resolving problems with volunteers procedure (for volunteers) and could result in the termination of the working relationship.

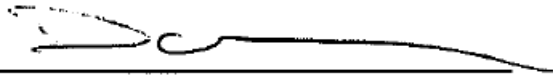
2.0 Appendices

2.1 - Raising Concerns Procedure



Sign off

By signing below I can confirm that I have carefully read, understood and accepted the Harrogate Town AFC – Whistleblowing Policy, Document Version 1.2 - to be implemented for us from the date stated below.

X 

01/07/2023

Dave Riley
Board Member (Operations Director)

X 

01/07/2023

Richard Jones
Designated Safeguarding Officer