

WHITLEBLOWING POLICY

Purpose and scope of this policy statement

Whistleblowing is an important part of safeguarding and maintaining high standards of conduct within ESF Events. ESF Events encourages all staff, volunteers and participants to raise genuine concerns about the behaviour of individuals, ESF Events representatives or the organisation itself.

Concerns raised through whistleblowing may not necessarily relate to child abuse but may involve behaviour that breaches ESF Events' Codes of Conduct, falls below expected professional standards or pushes boundaries beyond acceptable limits. Whistleblowing is distinct from a complaint or grievance and usually applies when an individual witness's misconduct that could threaten the safety, wellbeing or rights of others, including children and young people.

A concern may relate to something that is currently happening, has happened in the past, or may happen in the future. ESF Events is committed to ensuring that anyone who raises a concern in good faith feels confident to do so and is protected from discrimination, victimisation or disadvantage as a result.

Aims of the policy

This policy aims to ensure that staff and volunteers understand their responsibility to raise serious concerns and feel confident to do so at the earliest opportunity. ESF Events is committed to providing clear reporting routes, ensuring concerns are taken seriously and responded to appropriately, and enabling individuals to receive feedback on action taken where possible.

The policy also aims to reassure whistle-blowers that they will be protected from reprisal or victimisation when concerns are raised in good faith. Individuals who whistle blow are protected by law and should not suffer unfair treatment, harassment or loss of employment as a result of raising a concern.

What concerns should be raised

Whistleblowing concerns may relate to breaches of conduct by ESF Events staff, volunteers or associated professionals, behaviour that could cause reputational damage to ESF Events, discrimination of any kind, concerns that may affect the health or safety of children, young people or adults, inappropriate treatment or care of a child or young person, misuse of ESF Events assets or resources, decision-making for personal gain, abuse of position or power, dishonesty or deceit, or tampering with records or documents.

Confidentiality and protection

All whistleblowing concerns will be handled sensitively and confidentially wherever possible. Every effort will be made to protect the identity of the whistle-blower unless disclosure is required by law or is necessary to safeguard others. Concerns raised in good faith will not result in harassment, victimisation or disadvantage.

Concerns may be raised anonymously; however, providing contact details may assist with clarification or follow-up where appropriate.

How to raise a concern

Any individual with a concern about an adult in a position of trust or organisational conduct may whistleblow using the following routes:

ESF Events Safeguarding phone line: 07947 313302

(for the duration of the festival)

Or contact:

- The appropriate National Governing Body (FA, SYFA, England Netball, RFU, RFL)
- Police or Children's Social Care
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 | help@nspcc.org.uk
- Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU): cpsu@nspcc.org.uk

Concerns can be raised anonymously, although providing contact details may assist with follow-up or clarification.