

# Bury Football Club

Gigg Lane, Bury, BL9 9HR

Find us on:



Club Tel: 0161 764 4881 | Fax: 0161 764 5221 | Website: [www.buryfc.co.uk](http://www.buryfc.co.uk) | e-mail: [info@buryfc.co.uk](mailto:info@buryfc.co.uk)



## Safeguarding Whistleblowing Policy

### 1.0 Purpose of the Policy

This policy is intended to encourage individuals to raise any concerns they have about the Health, Safety and Welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved with Bury Football Club, and details how their concerns can be raised.

It provides for a method of raising concerns, assurance of receiving a response, how feedback will be received on any action taken and how to further pursue the matter if they are not satisfied.

Bury Football Club seeks to reassure individuals they will be protected from reprisals or victimization for whistleblowing in good faith.

### 2.0 Scope

This policy covers everyone involved in activity carried out under the jurisdiction of Bury Football Club.

### 3.0 Policy Statement

It is often the case that players, coaches, officials, parents, carers or team followers are the first to realize that a child's health, 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 victimization.

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. Bury Football Club urges anyone to come forward and voice those concerns or suspicions and commits to supporting those who raise matters of concern being raised without fear of victimization, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage.

The policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns within Bury Football Club, in the first instance, 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 all persons involved with Bury Football Club, but especially the person making the complaint, the person who is the subject of the complaint and, most importantly, the person or persons who are or who may be at risk.

### 4.0 Safeguarding

Bury Football Club recognizes that raising a concern and reporting an allegation can be a difficult decision to make through fear of reprisals from those responsible for the alleged poor practice or abuse. If an individual believes what they say is or may be true, then they should have no reason to fear reporting their concern as a duty of care to the child, young person or vulnerable adult concerned.

Where concerns are raised in good faith, Bury Football Club will offer its full support to the whistleblower and will not tolerate any resulting bullying, harassment or victimization whatsoever. Should this occur, any perpetrators will be dealt with under Bury Football Club's Disciplinary Policy and Procedures, which may result in possible expulsion from the club.

### 5.0 Confidentiality

Bury Football Club will do its utmost to protect the confidentiality of a whistleblower if they do not want their identity to be disclosed. However, it must be acknowledged that any subsequent investigation into an allegation, the whistleblower may be needed provide a statement to form part of the evidence.

If the investigation process requires the whistleblower to be identified, or it becomes apparent that the whistleblower will be identified, then notice will be given to them by the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO), to which person(s) or organization(s) the identity disclosure will be made. They will then be given the opportunity to discuss any likely

consequences.

## **6.0 Raising a Concern or Making an Allegation**

In the first instance, any suspicions or concerns should be brought to the attention of Bury Football Club's DSO, either verbally or in writing.

At the time of this policy being written Bury Football Club's DSO is Helen Smithson who can be contacted via email at helen.smithson@buryfc.co.uk.

The concern needs to be as specific as possible, including the reason for the concern, an outline of the issue, the history or background and any names, dates and locations where possible.

The earlier an individual expresses a concern, the easier it is for someone to take prompt and efficient action. Although the whistleblower is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate to the club's DSO that there are sufficient grounds for their concern.

## **7.0 Anonymous Allegations**

Bury Football Club encourages the whistleblower to put their name to a concern or allegation. Anonymous concerns or allegations are much less powerful and are, therefore, much harder to prove.

It is important to emphasize that any concern or allegation received anonymously will still be considered and an investigation will be undertaken at the discretion of the DSO who will assess the seriousness of the concern, the credibility of the concern, and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources or factual records.

## **8.0 Untrue or Unproven Allegations**

If an investigation finds that the concerns or allegations made by a whistleblower are untrue or have not been substantiated, but were reported in good faith, then no action will be taken against the whistleblower. However, if it is established a concern or allegation was made with malicious or frivolous intent or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against the whistleblower. In any such cases, Bury Football Club's Disciplinary Policy / Procedure will apply.

## **9.0 Responses and Outcomes to Concerns and Allegations**

The DSO or other relevant person(s), body(ies) or organization(s) will respond accordingly to all concerns and allegations that are raised with communications either by email, telephone or in person as is deemed appropriate, and will liaise with the whistleblower as necessary until the matter is concluded.

## **10.0 The Investigation Process**

All investigations will be undertaken by the DSO, who may be supported by an appropriate member of Bury Football Club's Senior Management Team. However, should you feel that you have not received a satisfactory response or conclusion to your concern you can approach the following people / organizations:

1. Bury Football Club Chief Executive Officer
2. The Lancashire FA County Welfare Officer
3. Ann Hussey, Child Protection Advisor, The Football League, C/O Operations Centre  
Edward VII Quay, Navigation Way, Preston, Lancashire, PR2 2YF  
Tel: 01772 - 325811 or Email: ahussey@football-league.co.uk
4. The FA / NSPCC Child Protection 24-Hour Helpline 0808 800 5000
5. Childline 0800 1111 or, in writing to Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH
6. Or by going direct to the Police and/or Social Services

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Policy Owner</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Approval Route and date</b>	<b>Date of next review</b>
1.0	Dec 2016	Ian Kendall	Development of Whistleblowing section in Safeguarding Policy	Approved at Welfare Meeting 21 Nov 16	Dec 2017