



WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

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Whistleblowing Policy

LEAPS Suffolk is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability. If a member of staff discovers evidence of malpractice or wrongdoing within any aspect of LEAPS Suffolk work, they can disclose this information internally without fear of reprisal.

Our Whistleblowing policy is intended to cover concerns such as:

- Financial malpractice or fraud
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation
- Dangers to health and safety or the environment
- Criminal activity
- Improper conduct or unethical behaviour e.g., bullying, inappropriate touch of an attendee, failure to comply with LEAPS Suffolk policies and procedures etc.

This policy should not be used to question business decisions made by the Club, or to raise any matters that are covered under other policies (e.g., discrimination or racial harassment). Any allegations relating to child and adult safeguarding will follow the procedures set out in the Safeguarding Children and Adult policy.

Raising a concern

Ideally the staff member should firstly speak with the Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL) who will be requested to put his or her allegations in writing, setting out the background to the situation, giving names, dates and places where possible, and the reason why they are concerned about the situation.

If, due to the nature of the problem this is not appropriate, then concerns should be taken to either Deputy, (Jenna Burton or Katie Finch), as identified on the Safeguarding Children and Adult Policy.

In the exceptional circumstances that two members of the safeguard team are involved, the person with the allegation should not go to the third joint Deputy, but inform LADO, without delay.

Additionally, if there is a belief that the concern has not been taken seriously or acted upon then any one can “Whistleblow”

If this person is unwilling or unable to act on the concern, the staff member should then raise it with:

- Ofsted (if it concerns the safe and effective running of the club)
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if it concerns a child protection issue and is not already covered by the procedure set out in the Club’s Safeguarding Children and Adult policy)
- Ultimately, with the police (if a crime is thought to have been committed).

If the member of staff is still uncertain about how to proceed with the concern, he or she should contact the whistle-blowing charity PCAW (Public Concern at Work) for advice.

Responding to a concern

Initial enquiries will usually involve a meeting with the individual raising the concern, and will decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. If a concern relates to issues which fall within the scope of other policies, it will be addressed under those policies. If the initial meeting does not resolve the concern, further investigation is required.

The appropriate person will investigate the concerns thoroughly, ensuring that a written response can be provided within ten working days where feasible, or if this is not possible, giving a date by which, the final response can be expected.

The response should include details of how the matter was investigated, conclusions drawn from the investigation, and who to contact if the member of staff is unhappy with the response and wishes to take the matter further.

Rights and responsibilities of the whistle blower

All concerns will be treated in confidence and LEAPS Suffolk will make every effort not to reveal the identity of anyone raising a concern in good faith. At the appropriate time, however, the member of staff may need to come forward as a witness. If a member of staff raises a concern in good faith which is then not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against that person. If the investigation concludes that the member of staff maliciously fabricated the allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against that person.

Contact information

Senior Safeguard Team:

Karen Double – Manager and Safeguard Lead – 07761397535 or karen@leapssuffolk.org.uk

Jenna Burton – Deputy Lead – jenna@leapssuffolk.org.uk

Katie Finch – Deputy Lead – katie@leapssuffolk.org.uk

Tel 07502775685

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): 0300 123 2044

LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board): 08456 066067

Ofsted: 0300 123 4666

MASH: 03456 061499

Police: 999

PCAW (Public Concern at Work): 0203 117 2520