



## Safeguarding Reporting

Macclesfield Town Football Club realise that raising a concern and reporting allegations are often difficult to make through fear of reprisals from those responsible for the alleged poor practice. If the individual believes what they say to be true and are not deemed to be malicious Macclesfield Town Football Club will fully support the whistleblower and will not tolerate any bullying, harassment or victimisation whatsoever. If this does occur, any perpetrators will be dealt with under Macclesfield Town Football Club's disciplinary policy/procedure resulting in possible expulsion and termination of employment from the club.

Players, coaches, officials, staff, parents or team followers are often the first to realise that an individual's and, more specifically within Macclesfield Town Football Club, a child's safety and welfare is 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 victimisation.

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. Macclesfield Town Football Club would urge anyone to come forward and voice those concerns.

This policy details how individuals can raise a matter of concern without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. The policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns within Macclesfield Town Football Club rather than overlooking a problem or blowing the whistle outside.

It is in the interest of all concerned that disclosures of potential abuse or irregularities are dealt with properly, quickly and discreetly.

### **How to raise a concern:**

All concerns will be treated sensitively and with due regard to confidentiality and where possible every effort will be made to protect your identity if you so wish. Nevertheless, this information will need to be passed onto those with a legitimate need to have this information and it may be necessary for you to provide a written statement or act as a witness in any subsequent disciplinary proceedings or enquiry. This will always be discussed with you first.



## **Step 1**

If you wish to raise a concern you should normally raise it with your line manager, or with the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) if you are not an employee of Macclesfield Town Football Club. This can be done in person or in writing.

Macclesfield Town Football Club recognises that sometimes it may be inappropriate for you to approach your line manager or the DSO with your concern. In these circumstances, a number of alternatives are available depending on the nature of your concern. You can contact any of the following:-

- The FA
- The EFL
- The General Manager

Although you are not expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of your concerns, you will need to demonstrate that you have sufficient evidence or other reasonable ground to raise them.

## **Step 2**

The person with whom you have raised your concern will acknowledge its receipt as soon as possible and will write to you within 28 days to let you know how your concern will be dealt with. The information you can then expect to receive is:

- An indication of how the concern will be dealt with
- An estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response
- Whether any initial enquiries have been made
- Whether further investigation will take place, and if not why not
- Information about support available for you

The person with whom you have raised your concern will at the same time notify the General Manager that a whistleblowing allegation has been made.

## **Step 3**

Initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate. Where an investigation is necessary, it may take the form of one or more of the following:-



- An internal investigation by the DSO/General Manager, which may, for example, take the form of a disciplinary investigation
- A referral to the EFL

#### **Step 4**

You will be informed of the outcome of any investigation, in writing, and/or of any action taken, subject to the constraints of confidentiality and the law. If you do not feel your concern has been addressed adequately you may raise it with an independent body such as one of the following as appropriate:-

- The EFL
- The FA
- Your trade union
- The Citizen's Advice Bureau
- A relevant voluntary organisation
- The police

You must make a disclosure 'in Macclesfield Town Football Club's interest' and in the circumstances it must be reasonable for you to make the disclosure. If there is an issue of an exceptionally serious nature which you believe to be substantially true, then you may disclose the issue to someone other than those listed above. In determining whether it is reasonable for you to have made a disclosure the identity of the person to whom the disclosure is made will be taken into account. Disclosures to anyone outside of the recognised bodies specified may not be protected disclosures under the Act.

#### **Confidentiality:**

Macclesfield Town Football Club will do its utmost to keep confidential the identity of a whistleblower. Should any allegations be made through whistleblowing it should be noted that a statement may be needed to form part of the evidence.

Should the whistleblower need to be identified or it becomes apparent that the whistleblower will be identified because of any subsequent investigation, notice will be given to the whistleblower, by the club's DSO or General Manager to which persons the identity disclosure will be made, with a chance to discuss any likely consequences.



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

Anyone wishing to raise a concern should do so either verbally or in writing to the DSO.

Designated Safeguarding Officer is The Welfare Officer who can be contacted on [Welfare@mtfc.co.uk](mailto:Welfare@mtfc.co.uk) or on 01625 264686 (Club) 07522 903063 (Mobile)

The concern needs to be as specific as possible including any names, dates and locations where possible.

The burden of proof does not lie with the alerter.

Should any concerns or allegations be made, Macclesfield Town FC would encourage the whistleblower to put their name to the allegation. Any concerns or allegations that are anonymous are much less powerful and are therefore much harder to prove. Should Macclesfield Town Football Club receive any anonymous allegations these will be investigated so far as is possible based on the limited information available.

If, after the course of an investigation, it has been found that the concerns or allegations are untrue or have not been substantiated then no action will be taken against the whistleblower. If, however, it is established that they have made malicious allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against them. In such cases, Macclesfield Town Football Club's disciplinary policy/procedure will apply.