

Whistleblowing Policy

1. Introduction

We expect the highest standards of integrity from everybody involved in delivering our service. This Whistleblowing policy exists for the eventuality that we, or our staff, do not get this right.

2. What is Whistleblowing?

'Whistleblowing' refers to the internal or external disclosure of serious malpractice as well as illegal acts, or omissions, at work.

3. Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to everyone who works for Ash Manor, including employees, volunteers, trainees, and contractors. It also applies to players and parents.

4. Purpose of this policy

- provide an effective way for you to raise serious legitimate concerns and receive feedback on any action undertaken by us as a result of you raising them.
- ensure that you will be protected from retaliation for having raised your concern in good faith.
- provide you with options to escalate the matter if you are dissatisfied with our response, or if internal investigation is not appropriate.
- allow Ash Manor to take action against any individual who makes allegations in bad faith and/or publicly discloses information when it is unreasonable for them to do so.

5. Protecting individuals using this policy

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 and it provides protection for individuals who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters, outlined here. These are called qualifying disclosures. A qualifying disclosure is one made in good faith by an individual who has a reasonable belief of the occurrence of one or more of the following:

- a criminal offence (including fraudulent and corrupt behaviour or malpractice);
- an act creating risk to health and safety;
- an act causing damage to the environment;
- a breach of any other legal obligation;
- concealment of any of the above.

You are not required to prove that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed. You do, however, need to demonstrate that you have reasonable cause to believe it to be so.

If you make such a protected disclosure in good faith, you have the right not to be dismissed (in the case of staff) or subjected to discrimination. This remains the case should it materialise that you were mistaken.

We will, in so far as is reasonable, aim to treat all individuals making a disclosure in the spirit of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

6. Malicious disclosures

If you raise a matter which you know to be untrue or you are involved in any way in the malpractice, wrongdoing or illegal acts or omissions, your behaviour will be addressed through the appropriate policies.

7. Non-whistleblowing concerns

This policy is only to be used in the exceptional circumstances as outlined in section 5, above. There are a number of Ash Manor policies that will be relevant in other circumstances. This list includes but is not limited to:

- safeguarding and child protection;
- anti-bullying;
- codes of conduct.

8. Raising a concern

You should raise your whistleblowing concern as soon as possible. This will make it easier for us to act and enable any problems to be resolved or reported quickly. You can make your disclosure verbally, but written disclosures are preferable as these will make the process more efficient and effective. In your disclosure, you should:

- Provide any relevant context and background, including relevant dates, venues, names;

- State clearly the reason why the situation causes concern;
- You must state that you are raising your concern using the Whistleblowing policy and whether you wish your identity to be kept confidential. While we will make every effort to deal with your case confidentially, depending on the circumstances of the case this may not always be possible. Where this is the case, you will be informed of this and the reasons why it was not possible;
- We will consider anonymous disclosures, but we do not encourage them as anonymity often makes it difficult to properly investigate concerns, protect staff or give feedback on outcomes.

9. Who should I raise it with?

In the first instance you should raise the matter with Hareen (hareen@tennisavenue.co.uk) or Ilge (ilge@tennisavenue.co.uk), providing they are not the subject of your concern. Should they be the subject of your concern please raise the matter with our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Margaret Evans (margaret@tennisavenue.co.uk).

10. What happens after I raise a concern?

Your disclosure will always be acknowledged within three working days and investigated by the person that you raise your concern to.

They will arrange to meet you as soon as possible, away from the centre if necessary, to enable you to explain your concern, as outlined in section 8, above. As stated, we may not always be able to keep your details confidential, but we will always let you know if it is not possible to do so.

You will be told either at the meeting or as soon as possible afterwards, what action will be taken to address the concern you have raised. Where action is not taken, you will be informed and given an explanation. The action taken in response to a disclosure will depend on the nature of the concern. Typically, the matters raised may result in one or more of the following:

- no action required;
- action being taken under another Ash Manor policy or procedure;
- an internal investigation under this policy;
- a referral to the police or relevant authority

11.Raising a concern externally

We strongly encourage you to exhaust the internal processes set out above in the first instances.

In exceptional or urgent circumstances, however, or where, having made a disclosure, you are unhappy with the outcome, you have a legal right to make a disclosure to prescribed bodies. These include but are not limited to:

- LTA Safeguarding Team on 020 8487 7000;
- the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at Kingston on 020-88917370 or 020-85474609 or email LADO@achievingforchildren.org.uk;
- NSPCC on 0808 800 5000.

Ash Manor reserves the right to make a referral or your concerns to any of the above agencies without your consent. Additional relevant details can be found in the centre's safeguarding policy.

12.Making a disclosure to the press

Disclosures to the press will not be considered reasonable and may constitute misconduct. As such, the matter might be treated as a disciplinary matter in accordance with our other related policies.

Policy Version Control

Issue	Date	Author	Status	Date of Review
Version 1.0	01/08/2019	HW	Approved	01/08/2020