

Whistle-blowing Policy

Introduction:

We encourage all employees and contractors to report any illegal or unethical behaviour within the company 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**

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 (eg discrimination or racial harassment). Any allegations relating to child protection will follow the procedures set out in the **Safeguarding and Child Protection policy**. Any concerns relating to the employment conditions of an individual member of staff should be raised according to the procedures set out in the **Staff Grievance policy**.

Raising a concern

Ideally the staff member should put their 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.

In the first instance concerns should be taken to the manager. If due to the nature of the concern consult the Local Authority Designated Officer or the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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

- The Local Authority Designated Officer or the Local Safeguarding Children Board (if it concerns a child protection issue and is not already covered by the procedure set out in Stride's **Safeguarding and Child Protection 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 can 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 Stride 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:

- LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): Jon Goddard 01793 463854
- LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board): 01793 463803
- PCAW (Public Concern at Work): 020 7404 6609 (website: www.pcaw.org.uk)

Related policies: Staff Grievance policy, **Safeguarding and Child Protection policy**.

This policy was adopted by Stride 360	Date: 29/10/24
To be reviewed by: 29/10/26	Written by: Simone Lyons