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**Newport CIC**  
**Whistleblowing Policy**

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<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Directors
<b>Queries to be directed to:</b>	Senior Management Team

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Sporting Chance Newport CIC reserves the right to amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.

<b>Date created:</b>	October 2020
<b>Date of last review:</b>	October 2021
<b>Date of next review:</b>	October 2022

## **1. Summary**

Sporting Chance Newport CIC is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability.

This policy is designed to ensure that all who work or volunteer for Sporting Chance Newport CIC know how to raise major concerns that fall outside the scope of other internal policies and procedures and makes it clear that this can be done without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. This Whistle Blowing Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within Sporting Chance Newport CIC rather than overlooking a problem or “blowing the whistle” outside.

## **2. What is the policy about?**

There are procedures in place for you to lodge a grievance relating to your own employment. The Whistle Blowing Policy is intended to cover major concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures. These include: -

- Conduct which is a criminal offence or a breach of law.
- Disclosures related to miscarriages of justice.
- Health and Safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees.
- Damage to the environment.
- The unauthorised use of funds.
- Possible fraud and corruption.
- Sexual, physical or verbal abuse.
- Other unethical conduct.

Thus, any serious concerns that you have about any aspect or service provision, or the conduct of Sporting Chance Newport CIC can be reported under the Whistle Blowing Policy.

This may be about something that: -

- Makes you feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards, your experience or the standards you believe Sporting Chance Newport CIC subscribes to; or
- Is against Sporting Chance Newport CIC’s policies or procedures; or
- Amounts to improper conduct.

**It is possible that in the course of your work for Sporting Chance Newport CIC, you may identify an act by a third party, not acting on our behalf or part of our service provision arrangements, which raises a serious concern in your mind. Any such issues should be reported using the routes set out in this policy. While Sporting Chance Newport CIC cannot undertake to directly investigate such matters it will raise these on your behalf with the relevant agency.**

### **3. Who is the policy for?**

This policy applies to all Sporting Chance Newport CIC employees, workers and volunteers. It has been discussed with union representatives and has their support. The school will risk assess absence for all pupils to determine the manner and time scale of response when a pupil is not at school without parental/carer contact (see appendix 3 for further guidance).

### **4. Policy statement**

This policy aims to:

- Encourage you to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice;
- Provide avenues for you to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken;
- Ensure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue them if you are not satisfied;
- Reassure you that you will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if you have a reasonable belief that you have made any disclosure in the public interest.

### **5. How does the Whistleblowing policy work?**

#### **5.1 Protected Disclosure**

In order to make a protected disclosure, you must have a reasonable belief that the issue you wish to “blow the whistle” about is in the public interest. It is important to bear in mind that you do not have to be correct in your belief or have proof of alleged wrongdoing, but you must have a reasonable belief that wrongdoing has been or is likely to be committed. You have no responsibility for investigating the matter – it is Sporting Chance Newport CIC’s responsibility to ensure that an investigation into your disclosure takes place.

#### **5.2 Safeguards: Harassment or Victimisation**

Sporting Chance Newport CIC is committed to good practice and high standards and will be supportive of its employees, workers and volunteers. Sporting Chance Newport CIC recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. If you believe what you are saying is true, you should have nothing to fear because you will be taking the right course of action for your employer and those for who you are providing a service. Sporting Chance Newport CIC will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith. Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice will not influence or be influenced by disciplinary or redundancy procedures that already affect you.

### **5.3 Confidentiality**

If you so wish, all concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness. This policy encourages you to put your name to your concern whenever possible.

Concerns expressed anonymously are as much less powerful but will be considered at the discretion of Senior Management Team.

In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account will include:

- The seriousness of the issues raised;
- The credibility of the concern; and
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

You may be asked to justify the grounds of your original complaint especially if the initial investigation does not support your complaint.

### **5.4 Untrue Allegations**

If you express a concern that is in the public interest, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you.

However, if you make an allegation which is held to be done frivolously, vexatiously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

### **5.5 How to raise a concern**

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with your immediate line manager or his/her senior. You may already have a departmental procedure you can use. This depends, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of the malpractice. If you believe that management is involved, you can contact the School Management board.

Concerns may be raised orally initially but should be confirmed in writing. Employees, workers or volunteers who wish to make a written report are invited to use the following format:

- The background and history of the concern (giving relevant dates); and
- The reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation.

The Senior Management Team will provide any help you need in expressing your concern.

The earlier you express the concern the easier it is to take action. Although you are not expected to prove beyond all reasonable doubt the truth of an allegation, you will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that on the balance or probabilities there are reasonable grounds for the concern you have raised.

Advice/guidance on how to pursue matters of concern may be obtained from:

- The Senior Management Team
- The School Management Board

You can also report and get advice about fraud or internet crime by calling 'Action Fraud' a section of the police on 0300 123 2040 (text-phone 0300 123 2050).

- Having first taken note of the provisions of paragraph 5.8 of this policy.

You may wish to consider discussing your concern with a colleague first and you might find it easier to raise the matter if there are two (or more) of you who have had the same experience or concerns.

You may invite the trade union, professional association representative or a workplace colleague to be present during any meetings or interviews in connection with the concerns you have raised. Anyone who helps you will need to respect the confidentiality of the investigation.

### **5.6 How Sporting Chance Newport CIC will respond**

Sporting Chance Newport CIC will respond to your concerns as soon as is practical.

Do not forget that testing out your concerns is not the same as either accepting or rejecting them.

Where appropriate, the matters raise may:

- Be investigated by an external investigator, management, internal audit, or through the disciplinary process;
- Be referred to the police;
- Be referred to the external auditor;
- Be referred to the appropriate LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer or Safeguarding); and/or
- Form the subject of an independent inquiry, for example, through the Area Child Protection Committee for child abuse.

In order to protect individuals and those accused of misdeeds or possible malpractice, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take.

The overriding principle that Sporting Chance Newport CIC will have in mind is the public interest. Concerns or allegations that fall within the scope of specific Sporting Chance Newport CIC or statutory procedures will normally be referred for consideration under those procedures.

Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation. If urgent action is required this will be taken before any investigation is concluded. The school will use a standardised register for keeping the attendance records and regular monitoring will be carried out by the Senior Management Team and designated staff. The Head of Education or designated staff member will provide regular updates to the School Management Board on a termly basis in the following areas:

Within ten working days of a concern being raised, a representative of the Senior Management Team will write to you:

- Acknowledging that the concern has been raised;
- Indicating how Sporting Chance Newport CIC propose to deal with the matter;
- Giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response;
- Telling you whether any initial enquiries have been made;
- Supplying you with information on staff support mechanisms; and
- Telling you whether further investigations will take place and if not, why.

The amount of contact between those considering the issues and you will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved, and the clarity of the information provided. If necessary, Sporting Chance Newport CIC will seek further information from you.

Where any meeting is arranged, off-site if you so wish, you can be accompanied by a trade union professional association representative or a workplace colleague.

Sporting Chance Newport CIC will take steps to minimise any difficulties that you may experience as a result of raising a concern. For instance, if you are required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings Sporting Chance Newport CIC will arrange for you to receive advice about the procedure and where appropriate financial or other support.

Sporting Chance Newport CIC recognises that you need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. Thus, subject to legal constraints, we will inform you of the outcome of any investigation.

As the investigation progresses, you will be kept informed as to any developments, as far as is possible under the constraints that may apply to Sporting Chance Newport CIC.

## 5.9 Interplay with Grievance Policy

If you have chosen to include a “protected disclosure” as a part of a formal grievance then this may, at Sporting Chance Newport CIC’s discretion, be investigated and you will receive a response, under the terms of that policy. If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the grievance process you will not be able to additionally raise the same, or essentially the same, matters under this policy.

## 6. Related Policies

- Complaints policy
- Bullying and Harassment policy
- Disciplinary policy
- Grievance policy

## Annex 1: Equality Impact Assessment

Sporting Chance Newport CIC is committed to always: avoiding the potential for unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool for identifying whether or not strategies, projects, services, guidance, practices or policies have an adverse or positive impact on a particular group of people or equality group. While currently only public bodies are legally required to complete EIA’s, Sporting Chance Newport CIC has adopted the process in line with its commitment to continually improve our equality performance.

### 1. Summary

This EIA is for:	Attendance Policy
EIA completed by:	Directors
Date of assessment:	October 2021
Assessment approved by:	October 2021

#### Objectives and intended outcomes

This EIA has been completed in order to ensure that the implications and potential impact, positive and negative, of the Sporting Chance Newport CIC attendance policy for all staff have been fully considered and addressed, whether or not the staff members share a protected characteristic.



## 2. Potential Impacts, positive and negative

Equality Area	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary
Age		X		The policy applies equally to all members of staff regardless of age. It's not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on any member of staff because of their age.
Disability		X		The policy applies equally to all members of staff regardless of health/disability. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on any member of staff because of their disability.
Pregnancy & Maternity/Paternity		X		It's not considered that the policy positive or negatively impacts on pregnant women or on staff on maternity or paternity leave.
Race (incl. origin, colour and nationality)		X		The policy applies to all members of staff regardless of their race, origin, colour or nationality. It's not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively in these respects.
Gender and Gender Re-assignment		X		This policy applies equally to all members of staff regardless of their gender at any given time. It's not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on any member of staff because of gender.
Sexual Orientation		X		This policy applies equally to all members of staff regardless of their sexual orientation. It's not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on any member of staff because of their sexual orientation.

## 3. Negative impacts and mitigations

Negative Impact	Mitigation	Owner
None		



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