Whistleblowing Policy

Torquay Alpine Ski Club is committed to developing a culture where it is safe and acceptable for all those involved in our sport to raise concerns about unacceptable practice and misconduct. Whistleblowing can involve sharing potentially vital information about health and safety risks, environmental factors, fraud, harm of children or adults at risk, or covering up for someone. It is the duty of everyone within Torquay Alpine Ski Club to speak up about genuine concerns and disclose them. This Policy applies to Torquay Alpine Ski Club committee, coaches, parents, contractors, visitors, officials and anyone working on behalf of the club or volunteers and members.

Torquay Alpine Ski Club will not tolerate bullying, harassment or victimisation of anyone who raises a genuine concern.

Personal grievances (for example bullying, harassment, discrimination or how you have been treated as part of a disciplinary procedure) are not covered by whistleblowing law, unless your particular case is in the public interest.

These matters should be raised under the club Complaints Procedure.

What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing encourages and enables members of the club and others to raise serious issues within the organisation, rather than overlooking a problem or “blowing the whistle” outside.

The whistleblower must believe they are acting in the public interest. It is important to have procedures and a culture that enables staff and volunteers to share, in confidence with a

designated person (the Club Welfare Officer or Snowsport England's Safeguarding Lead), concerns they may have.

This may be about criminal behaviour; a safeguarding or child or adult protection concern; organisational poor practice or incompetence, for example inadequate insurance or not complying with fire regulations or procedures; behaviour that pushes boundaries beyond acceptable limits, for example overtraining or coercion to train against medical advice.

If this is consistently ignored a culture may develop within an organisation whereby staff and young people are 'silenced'. The concern may be about something that has happened in the past, is happening now, or that is likely to happen in the future. If you've seen, heard or suspect wrongdoing within the club, or know of a serious risk or accident 'waiting to happen', this should be passed on.

Whistleblowers are witnesses to a malpractice and must not be penalised for any disclosure of information. In fact, certain categories of whistleblowers are protected by law.

Whistleblowing is not being disloyal to staff or participants as it is in the public interest to raise the concern.

Where a concern relates to the immediate safety of a child or adult at risk, the Club's Safeguarding Policy should be followed without delay. Whistleblowing arrangements are intended to support, not replace, safeguarding procedures.
Concerns may be raised anonymously. However, providing contact details may assist the Club or Snowsport England in investigating the concern more effectively.
Concerns may relate to behaviour occurring both in person and online, including social media, messaging platforms or other digital communication.

Reasons for Whistleblowing

Everyone has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour:

- To prevent the problem worsening or
- To protect or reduce risk to others or
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

What stops people from whistleblowing?

• Starting a chain of events which spirals

• Disrupting work or training

• Fear of getting it wrong

• Fear of repercussions or damaging careers

• Feeling of being disloyal to colleagues

• Fear of not being believed

What should you do?

If something is reported to you, try and record the following details:

• Name, address and telephone number of the informant

• Names of individuals involved

• The manner of the alleged incident or circumstances

• Whether they will submit any evidence (if applicable)

• How they became aware of the nature of the allegation

• Do not attempt to deal with the allegation or suspicion yourself

Who should you tell?

• Let the Club Welfare Officer know, who will then report the matter to the Safeguarding Lead at Snowsport England

• If you cannot refer the matter to the Club Welfare Officer (for example if they are implicated) you should go direct to the Safeguarding Lead at Snowsport England.

Tel: 01509 232323 or e mail welfare@snowsportengland.org.uk

Don't:

• Assume it doesn't matter, or no harm will arise, or ignore it as "it is not my responsibility"

• Inform the person about whom the concern was raised

• Commence your own investigation

• Inform any other members, participants employees or club members .

Do:

• Report it without delay

Confidentiality

The Club's Welfare Officer will treat all information confidentially and will only share it on a need to know basis. All whistleblowing concerns will be recorded securely and retained in accordance with the Club's data protection and safeguarding procedures.

Personal information will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Where possible confidentiality will be maintained, although it must be stressed that in cases of fraud or criminal activity and in cases of child safeguarding it will not be possible to maintain strict confidentiality.

Anyone handling confidential information where appropriate should use the "Seven Golden Rules to Information Sharing" as guidance and this can be found on page 4 within the "Information Sharing – Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers" on the Snowsport England website.

What happens next?

Torquay Alpine Ski Club and Snowsport England are fully supportive of whistleblowing for the sake of the child or other participants, and will provide support and protect those who whistleblow.

All concerns will be treated in confidence with information only passed on, on a need to know basis.

Reports made in good faith but which are later assessed as unfounded will not result in any action being taken against the reporter. However, persons reporting for malicious reasons may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Protection from Detriment: No person who raises a genuine concern in good faith will suffer discrimination, victimisation or disadvantage as a result of doing so. The Club will not tolerate retaliation against anyone who reports a concern honestly, even if the concern is not ultimately substantiated.
Concerns will be looked into and we aim to keep the whistleblower informed of the outcome if it is appropriate to do so.

Some concerns may require reporting to external agencies.

Other National Governing Bodies

If your concern falls within the remit of one of the other National Governing Bodies, or outside the remit of Snowsport England, your concern will be passed on appropriately. Your consent will be sought prior to passing the concern on unless it is a criminal or child protection offence.

Free Advice

You can also contact Protect (The Uks Whistleblowing Charity) – at Protect | Speak Up, Stop Harm or 020 3117 2520 for more help and advice. This could be because you are worried about reporting the matter to your club or Snowsport England, or because you do not feel your club or Snowsport England has handled the matter appropriately.

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