

The Change Foundation

Whistleblowing Policy

“Whilst local authorities play a lead role, safeguarding children and protecting them from harm is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.”

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

Whistle Blowing Procedures

The DSL and DDSL may be informed of allegations against TCF members of staff or volunteers. Allegations could be made by a participant or an internal or external member of staff/volunteer. If TCF staff or volunteers suspect external professionals of abuse, they must report this to the DSL and DDSL too. The DSL and DDSL have a duty to report these accusations to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for them to advise and potentially investigate. The DSL and DDSL will inform the Safeguarding Trustee whenever an allegation has been made and passed to the LADO.

It is vital that the concern is kept confidential and not shared with other members of staff, volunteers or anyone outside of the organisation.

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made directly to the Safeguarding Trustee and the LADO who is then responsible for taking action.

Support for the Reporter of Suspected Abuse

It is acknowledged that feelings generated by the discovery that a TCF member of staff or volunteer is or may be abusing a child, will raise concerns among other staff or volunteers. This includes the difficulties inherent in reporting such matters. TCF assures all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith (without malicious intent), reports his or her concerns about a colleague’s practice or the possibility that a child may be being abused.

Action by The Change Foundation

- Any suspicion that a participant has been abused by either a TCF member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the DSL and DDSL, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the participant in question and any other participants who may be at risk.
- The DSL and DDSL will notify the Safeguarding Trustee who, if appropriate with the Corporate Services Director, will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and LADO inquiries.
- The DSL and DDSL will refer the allegation to the Sutton LADO who may involve the Police or go directly to the Police if out of hours.

- Irrespective of the findings of the LADO or police inquiries, TCF must assess all individual cases under the appropriate misconduct/disciplinary procedure, to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled with other staff and volunteers. This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, TCF must reach a decision based on the available information that could suggest, on a balance of probability; it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of participants should always remain paramount.
- Consideration should be given about what support may be appropriate to participants, parents/carers, members of staff and also to the alleged perpetrator of the abuse.
- The DSL, DDSL and Safeguarding Trustee will also notify TCF CEO and the Chair of Trustees who will decide who should deal with any media enquiries and how.

Allegations of Previous Abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event. Where such an allegation is made, TCF should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the LADO or the Police. This is because other participants, either within or outside sport may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This is reinforced by the details of the Children's Act 1989.