

beYou Whistleblowing Policy

Version 1

Completed Date: 15th January 2025

Review Date: 15th January 2026

1. Policy Statement

At beYou, we are committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity, and accountability. This policy provides guidance to all staff, volunteers, and external partners on how to raise concerns about malpractice, wrongdoing, or unethical behaviour in a safe and confidential manner. Whistleblowing is essential for maintaining a transparent and trustworthy environment where concerns can be addressed appropriately.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and others associated with beYou. It covers concerns about:

- Safeguarding and child protection failures.
- Breaches of legal or regulatory requirements.
- Financial irregularities or fraud.
- Health and safety risks.
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
- Any other unethical or improper conduct.

3. Legal Framework

This policy is aligned with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which protects individuals who raise concerns in the public interest. Employees who whistleblow are protected from dismissal or victimisation as long as they:

- Believe the disclosure is in the public interest.
- Follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

4. Key Principles

- Concerns will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
- Whistleblowers will be protected from any form of retaliation or victimisation.
- Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible.
- False or malicious allegations will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

5. Raising a Concern If you suspect wrongdoing, you should raise your concern as soon as possible. You can do this verbally or in writing, providing as much detail as possible, including:

- The nature of the concern.

- Relevant dates, times, and locations.
- Any evidence or witnesses to support the concern.

Concerns can be raised through the following channels:

- Line Manager: If appropriate, speak to your immediate manager in the first instance.
- Designated Whistleblowing Officer (DWO): Rob Brown – Robert@firststep-sports.co.uk - 07880231620
- Senior Management Team: If the concern involves the DWO or cannot be resolved at a lower level.
- External Authorities: If you feel the matter has not been addressed internally, you can report it to relevant external bodies, such as:
 - Ofsted
 - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
 - NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285

6. Investigating a Concern All concerns raised will be acknowledged within five working days. The DWO will:

- Conduct an initial assessment to determine the appropriate course of action.
- Assign an investigator if necessary.
- Keep the whistleblower informed about the progress and outcome of the investigation, subject to confidentiality requirements.

7. Confidentiality

We will make every effort to protect the identity of whistleblowers. However, in some cases, it may be necessary to disclose the identity of the whistleblower to conduct a thorough investigation or comply with legal obligations. In such instances, we will inform the whistleblower before disclosure.

8. Protection Against Retaliation

Retaliation against a whistleblower is strictly prohibited. Any individual found to be harassing, victimising, or discriminating against a whistleblower will face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

9. False Allegations

While we encourage the reporting of genuine concerns, knowingly making false or malicious allegations is unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and compliant with legal requirements. The management team is responsible for overseeing its implementation.

11. Contact Information

- Designated Whistleblowing Officer (DWO): Rob Brown – Robert@firststep-sports.co.uk - 07880231620]
- Senior Management Team: Sam Gould – Samantha@firststep-sports.co.uk
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285

Approval and Sign-Off This policy has been approved by the management team and is effective from 15/01/2025.

Signed:

Rob Brown

Managing Director

beYou, First Step Sports Group

