



Whistleblowing Policy

At **Elite SF**, we expect all our coaches to act professionally at all times and hold the welfare and safety of every child as their paramount objective.

We recognise that there may be occasions where this may not happen, and we have in place a procedure for coaches to disclose any information that suggests children's welfare and safety may be at risk.

We expect all coaches to discuss any concerns with a manager at the earliest opportunity to enable problems to be resolved promptly.

Whistleblowing Definition

Whistleblowing is the term used when a worker passes on information concerning wrongdoing.

Legal Framework

The **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998**, commonly referred to as the 'Whistleblowing Act', amended the **Employment Rights Act 1996** to provide protection for employees who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters. These are called '**qualifying disclosures**.'

A **qualifying disclosure** is one made in the public interest by a coach who has a reasonable belief that any of the following is being, has been, or is likely to be committed:

- A criminal offence
- A miscarriage of justice
- An act creating risk to health and safety
- An act causing damage to the environment
- A breach of any other legal obligation or concealment of any of the above
- Any other unethical conduct
- An act that may be deemed as radicalised or a threat to national security

Disclosures do not have to be made “in good faith,” but they **must** be made in the public interest. This is essential when assessing a disclosure made by an individual.

The **Public Interest Disclosure Act** has the following rules for making a protected disclosure:

- You must believe it to be substantially true
- You must not act maliciously or make false allegations
- You must not seek any personal gain

It is not necessary for the coach to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be committed; a **reasonable belief** is sufficient.

Disclosure of Information

If, in the course of work for Elite SF, you become aware of information which you reasonably believe indicates that a child **is, may be, or is likely to be at risk of danger**, and/or one or more of the following may be happening, you **MUST** use Elite SF’s disclosure procedure:

- A criminal offence has been committed, is being committed, or is likely to be committed
- A person has failed, is failing, or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which they are subject (e.g., EYFS, Equality Act 2010)
- A miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur
- The health or safety of any individual has been, is being, or is likely to be endangered
- The environment has been, is being, or is likely to be damaged
- Information tending to show any of the above has been, is being, or is likely to be deliberately concealed

Disclosure Procedure

- If this information relates to **child protection and safeguarding**, then Elite SF’s **Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy** should be followed, with particular reference to the coach and volunteering section.

- Where you reasonably believe one or more of the circumstances listed above has occurred, you should **promptly disclose this to your manager** so that appropriate action can be taken.
 - If it is inappropriate to make such a disclosure to your manager (e.g. because it relates to your manager), you should speak to the **Operations Manager** or **Director**.
- Coaches will suffer **no detriment** of any sort for making a disclosure in accordance with this procedure. For further guidance, coaches should speak in confidence to the **Manager / Director**.
- Any disclosure or concerns raised will be treated seriously, dealt with consistently and confidentially, and followed through thoroughly.
- Any coach who **victimises others** for making a disclosure, deters employees from disclosing information, or makes **malicious allegations in bad faith** will be subject to potential breach of policy action, which may result in dismissal.
- Failure to report serious matters can also be investigated and potentially lead to disciplinary action, which may result in dismissal.
- Any management at Elite SF who **inappropriately deals with a whistleblowing issue** (e.g. failing to act in a timely manner or disclosing confidential information) may be deemed to have engaged in gross misconduct, which could lead to dismissal.
- All coaches are given the telephone numbers of the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**, the **local authority children's social care team**, and **Ofsted**, so they may contact these bodies if internal reporting is not possible.

Acknowledgement and Acceptance (BrightHR)

All self-employed coaches and contractors engaged by Elite SF are required to read and acknowledge this Policy Breach Procedure, along with all associated policies, via the BrightHR system (or equivalent compliance platform used by the business).

Acknowledgement via BrightHR constitutes confirmation that the individual:

- Has read and understood the contents of this procedure
- Agrees to adhere to all company policies and standards
- Understands the consequences of policy breaches as outlined

Failure to complete policy acknowledgement may result in:

- Suspension of work allocation
- Removal from scheduled sessions until compliance is confirmed

The business reserves the right to rely on digital acknowledgement records as evidence of acceptance of terms and expectations.

Adopted on: 29th December 2025

Signed on behalf of Elite SF: J. Bartram

Date for review: 29th December 2026