



Dwarf Sports Association UK - **Whistleblowing Policy**

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Approved by: Board of Trustees (TBC)

1. Purpose

The Dwarf Sports Association UK (DSAUK) is committed to the highest standards of integrity, accountability, and transparency. This Whistleblowing Policy ensures that concerns about potential wrongdoing, malpractice, or risks to safety and wellbeing can be raised in confidence and without fear of reprisal.

The policy exists to:

- Provide a safe and supportive environment for individuals to raise concerns.
- Ensure disclosures are handled appropriately, consistently, and fairly.
- Protect whistleblowers from victimisation, discrimination, or disadvantage.
- Promote a culture of openness where concerns can be addressed early and effectively.

2. Definition of Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information about suspected wrongdoing or dangers within an organisation. A whistleblower is someone who raises a genuine concern in the public interest.

Concerns may relate to (but are not limited to):

- Child safeguarding issues.
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
- Serious negligence or breaches of health and safety.
- Fraud, theft, or misuse of DSAUK funds or property.
- Breach of legal obligations.
- Data protection breaches or misuse of confidential information.
- Miscarriage of justice.
- Deliberate concealment of malpractice.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees of DSAuk.
- Volunteers and contractors.
- Members and participants in DSAuk programmes.
- Trustees and partners working with DSAuk.

4. Principles

- Confidentiality: All disclosures will be handled sensitively and information shared only on a need-to-know basis.
- Protection: No whistleblower will suffer detriment for raising a genuine concern, even if it proves unfounded.
- Fairness: All parties involved will be treated with fairness and respect.
- Public Interest: Concerns must be raised in good faith and not for personal gain.

5. Statutory Protection

Individuals making disclosures may be protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) if the disclosure is made in the public interest. Protection applies where the whistleblower reasonably believes the information shows:

- 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 a legal obligation.
- A miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur.
- The health or safety of an individual has been, is being, or is likely to be endangered.
- The environment has been, is being, or is likely to be damaged.
- Information relating to any of the above has been deliberately concealed.

6. Procedure for Raising Concerns

1. Initial Reporting

- Concerns should be reported in writing to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- If the concern involves or may involve the CEO, the concern should be reported directly to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

2. Information to Provide

- A clear description of the concern.
- Any supporting evidence.
- Details of any witnesses, if applicable.

3. Confidentiality

- Disclosures will be treated in strict confidence.
- Anonymous disclosures may be considered but may limit the ability to investigate fully.

7. Investigation Process

- The recipient (CEO or Chair) will acknowledge receipt of the concern within 5 working days.
- A preliminary assessment will be made to determine the appropriate course of action.
- If an investigation is required, it will be conducted promptly, proportionately, and impartially.
- The whistleblower will be informed of progress where possible, subject to confidentiality and legal constraints.
- Findings will be reported to the Board of Trustees, who will decide on necessary action.

8. Protection & Support for Whistleblowers

- DSAuk will take all reasonable steps to protect whistleblowers from victimisation, harassment, or disadvantage.
- Any retaliation against a whistleblower will be treated as a disciplinary matter.
- Support may be offered through confidential advice or counselling services where appropriate.

9. Malicious Allegations

Concerns raised in good faith will always be supported. However, malicious, frivolous, or knowingly false allegations may lead to disciplinary action.

10. Escalation

If an individual feels their concern has not been addressed properly by DSAuk, they may raise it externally to:

- Sport England (funding and governance body).
- UK Sport.
- The Charity Commission (if relating to governance or misuse of charitable funds).
- NSPCC / Child Protection in Sport Unit (for safeguarding concerns).
- The Police (for criminal matters).

11. Responsibilities

- CEO: Ensures concerns are addressed and reported to the Board.
- Chair of Trustees: Handles cases involving the CEO and ensures independence.
- Trustees: Provide oversight, ensuring policy compliance and fair handling of disclosures.

- All staff, volunteers, and members: Duty to speak up about genuine concerns and cooperate with investigations.

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the CEO and Board of Trustees, or sooner if legislation or organisational changes require it.