



**Definitions - In this Policy the following terms/expressions shall mean:**

- OCB – means Oxfordshire County Cricket Board.
- ECB – means England and Wales Cricket Board
- Children – refers to persons under the age of 18
- Safe Hands - means the ECB's cricket policies and procedures for safeguarding children within cricket.

**Statement of Intent**

The aim of this policy is to provide procedures and practical guidance for all OCB employees, agents, volunteers, and other professionals and our partners working alongside OCB to safeguard children (\*)

(\*The word “children” should be taken to mean all persons under the age of 18yrs)

**Introduction:**

OCB is committed to developing a culture where it is safe and acceptable for all those involved in cricket to raise concerns about unacceptable practice and misconduct.

You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong, but you may not feel able to express your concerns out of a belief that this would be disloyal to colleagues, or you may fear harassment, victimisation, or disadvantage. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child continuing to be unnecessarily at risk.

Those involved in the sport must acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult, it is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

OCB assures all involved in cricket that they will be treated fairly and that all concerns will be properly considered. In cases where the suspicions prove to be unfounded, no action will be taken against those who report their suspicions/allegations provided they acted in good faith and without malicious intent. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects whistle blowers from victimisation, discipline, or dismissal where they raise genuine concerns of misconduct or malpractice.

## **REASONS FOR WHISTLE BLOWING**

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

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

## **WHAT STOPS PEOPLE FROM WHISTLE BLOWING?**

- Starting a chain of events which spirals
- Disrupting the work or training
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

## **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries
- All concerns will be treated in confidence. During the process of investigating the

matter, every effort will be made to keep the identity of those raising the concern unknown, except to the minimum number of individuals practicable.

- The Oxfordshire County Safeguarding Manager and the ECB have a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation

- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith

- Malicious allegations may be considered a disciplinary offence

Should suspicions be raised via a “tip off”, the person receiving the tip off should attempt to obtain the following information from the informant:

- Name, address and telephone number
- Names of individuals involved
- The manner of the alleged incident/s or circumstances
- Whether they will submit any evidence (if applicable)

- How they became aware of the nature of the allegation

You should not attempt to deal with any allegation or suspicion yourself, rather inform the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Manager or the ECB Safeguarding Team.

#### **DO NOT:**

- Inform the person about whom the concern was raised
- Inform any other members, participants, or employees
- Commence your own investigation
- Annotate or remove evidence
- Delay in reporting the suspicion

Also never assume:

- “all is well, otherwise it would have been spotted earlier”
- “it doesn’t matter” or “no harm will arise”
- “ignore it as it is not my responsibility”

#### **WHO DO I TELL?**

The first person to whom you should report your suspicion or allegation is the Oxfordshire County Safeguarding Manager, Vicki Selby. In the absence of Vicki, please contact Alex Westbury, Deputy Safeguarding Officer.

[safeguarding@oxoncb.com](mailto:safeguarding@oxoncb.com) 07907 718923

If for any reason you cannot or do not wish to report to the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Team then please contact the Cricket Regulator Safeguarding Team by email on

[safeguarding@cricketregulator.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@cricketregulator.co.uk) or by telephone on 020 7432 1200.

You can make a report to the police or local child protection services, or by contacting the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line:

0800 028 0285

[help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

Alternatively, you can also contact Public Concern at Work on 020 7404 6609 or [whistle@pcaw.co.uk](mailto:whistle@pcaw.co.uk)

## **FEEDBACK**

The amount of feedback relating to the issue will vary depending on the nature and result of the investigations. However, where possible, those who have raised concerns will be kept informed of the progress and conclusion of the investigations.

(The above policy has been developed from 'ECB "Safe Hands" Crickets Policy for Safeguarding Children) and the Child Protection in Sport Unit's Guidance on Whistle blowing)