

# **Northstowe Karate Club Whistleblowing Policy**

This policy outlines how Northstowe Karate Club encourages and supports the reporting of serious concerns relating to malpractice, wrongdoing, or misconduct within the club environment. It ensures whistleblowers can report issues confidentially, without fear of retaliation or victimisation.

**1. Purpose** The purpose of this policy is to create a culture of openness and accountability where concerns about poor practice or abuse can be raised and acted upon quickly and appropriately.

## **2. What is Whistleblowing?**

Whistleblowing is the act of reporting serious concerns about wrongdoing such as:

- Criminal offences (e.g., theft, fraud, abuse)
- Child or adult safeguarding concerns
- Breach of legal or regulatory requirements
- Health and safety risks
- Discrimination, bullying, or harassment
- Attempts to cover up any of the above

## **3. Scope**

This policy applies to all club members, staff, volunteers, contractors, parents, and anyone involved with Northstowe Karate Club's activities.

## **4. Safeguards for Whistleblowers**

- Whistleblowers will not face discrimination, harassment, or retaliation for raising concerns in good faith.
- All concerns will be handled sensitively, and where possible, confidentiality will be maintained.
- Anonymous concerns will be considered, although it may be more difficult to investigate fully without contact details.

## **5. Reporting a Concern**

- Concerns should be raised with the club's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Welfare Officer.
- If the concern involves senior staff or the DSL, it may be reported directly to BMABA's Safeguarding Team.

Concerns can be raised in person, by email, phone, or using the club's incident reporting form.

## **6. Investigation Process**

- All concerns will be acknowledged and investigated promptly by an appropriate and impartial person.
- The whistleblower will be informed of the outcome where appropriate and subject to confidentiality constraints.
- Records will be securely maintained throughout the process.

## **7. Malicious Allegations**

False or malicious accusations made deliberately will be treated as a disciplinary matter, but genuine concerns raised in good faith will never result in adverse consequences for the whistleblower.

## **8. External Reporting**

If internal procedures are not effective or the individual is not comfortable reporting within the club, they may escalate concerns to external agencies such as:

- BMABA's Safeguarding Team safeguarding@bmaba.org.uk
- The NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- The Police or Social Services (for criminal or child protection concerns)

## **9. Monitoring & Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually and after any whistleblowing incident to ensure it remains robust and reflective of best safeguarding practice.