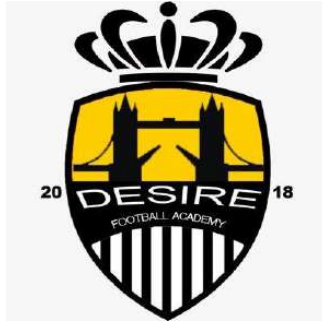


# Desire Football Academy Whistleblowing Policy

*Bridging the gap between Potential and successful*



**Effective Date:** 20/01/2025

This policy applies to all staff, players (ages 6-16), parents, guardians, caregivers, and volunteers involved with Desire Football Academy (hereinafter referred to as "the Academy").

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## 1. Purpose of the Policy

Desire Football Academy is committed to maintaining the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and accountability. We encourage a culture of transparency and openness, where individuals feel safe and supported when reporting concerns about any form of misconduct, unethical behaviour, or breaches of the Academy's values, policies, or legal obligations.

This policy provides a clear framework for reporting such concerns (referred to as "whistleblowing") and outlines how they will be handled to protect the interests of all individuals involved.

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## 2. What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the act of raising a concern about wrongdoing or unethical behaviour within the Academy. This could include issues such as:

- Fraud or financial misconduct
- Discrimination, harassment, or bullying
- Child protection concerns or safeguarding issues
- Health and safety violations
- Breach of the Academy's policies, codes of conduct, or legal obligations
- Any other activity that may harm the Academy's reputation or wellbeing of its participants

Whistleblowing is not about personal grievances, complaints, or disagreements with decisions. This policy is meant for reporting matters that are of significant concern to the broader wellbeing and integrity of the Academy and its community.

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### **3. How to Report a Concern**

If you believe that there has been wrongdoing or unethical behaviour at the Academy, you are encouraged to report it as soon as possible. The following steps should be followed:

#### **3.1 Internal Reporting Channels**

- **Step 1:** Report the concern to the designated whistleblowing officer at the Academy. This could be a senior member of staff, such as the Head Coach, Academy Director, or Safeguarding Officer.
- **Step 2:** If you are uncomfortable approaching the designated officer directly, you may report the concern in writing or via email to [Insert Contact Email].
- **Step 3:** If the concern involves the designated officer, you may report it to an alternative senior staff member, such as the Chair of the Academy Board or a designated independent person, ensuring the matter is handled impartially.

#### **3.2 Anonymous Reporting**

While we encourage direct communication, whistleblowers may also submit anonymous reports. To do so, please use the dedicated anonymous reporting channels, such as the Academy's secure email address: [Insert Email Address].

We respect the desire for confidentiality and will handle all anonymous reports with the same level of seriousness as identifiable reports.

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### **4. Protection Against Retaliation**

Desire Football Academy will ensure that anyone who makes a report in good faith is protected from retaliation. Retaliation includes any form of discrimination, victimization, or disadvantage that occurs as a result of raising a concern.

The Academy will not tolerate any form of retaliation or negative treatment towards individuals who make a report, even if the concern turns out to be unfounded. Anyone who engages in retaliation may face disciplinary action.

If you believe that you have been retaliated against after reporting a concern, please report this immediately to the designated whistleblowing officer.

## 5. Handling of Concerns

All reports will be taken seriously and handled promptly and professionally. The Academy will take the following steps in response to a concern:

- **Acknowledgment:** You will receive an acknowledgment that your concern has been received within [Insert Timeframe, e.g., 5 working days].
  - **Investigation:** The Academy will investigate the issue thoroughly, confidentially, and impartially. Where appropriate, external expertise may be brought in to assist with the investigation.
  - **Outcome:** After the investigation, the whistleblower will be informed of the outcome, to the extent that it is appropriate. The Academy may not always be able to disclose detailed information due to privacy or confidentiality reasons, but will explain the steps taken.
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## 6. Confidentiality

The Academy is committed to maintaining confidentiality throughout the whistleblowing process. The identity of the whistle-blower will be protected, except in the following circumstances:

- Where the whistle-blower consents to the disclosure of their identity.
- Where the disclosure of identity is required by law.
- Where the identity needs to be disclosed to enable a fair investigation and action to be taken (e.g., if the concern relates to criminal activity).

We will aim to ensure that the details of the investigation are kept confidential and only shared with those who need to know in order to resolve the issue.

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## 7. False or Malicious Reporting

Whistleblowing should only be used in good faith. Deliberately making false or malicious claims can harm the reputation and operations of the Academy, as well as the individuals involved. If a report is found to have been made with malicious intent or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against the individual making the false claim.



## 8. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective and in line with best practices. All whistleblowing reports will be recorded and reviewed to identify any patterns or systemic issues that require addressing.

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## 9. Contact Information

For further information or to report a concern, please contact:

### Whistleblowing Officer

Tamia Padotan

Position: Welfare Officer and Safeguarding Lead

Email: [infodfa21@gmail.com](mailto:infodfa21@gmail.com) or [Tamia2g9@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Tamia2g9@hotmail.co.uk)

Phone: 07379910592

### Alternative Contact (if needed)

Noah Kahsay

Position: CEO and Director

Number: 07518974849

Email: [Desirefc18@outlook.com](mailto:Desirefc18@outlook.com)

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## 10. Conclusion

Desire Football Academy values integrity and accountability and encourages all members of our community—staff, players, parents, and volunteers—to raise concerns if they witness or suspect any form of misconduct, unethical behaviour, or breach of our policies.

By fostering a culture of openness and accountability, we ensure that the Academy remains a safe, fair, and ethical environment for everyone involved.

