



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Whistle Blowing Policy

Approved by
HR Committee

Last reviewed on
June 2020

Next review due
June 2022



**RELEASING THE
IMAGINATION:
CELEBRATING
THE ART OF
THE POSSIBLE**



The whistle-blowing procedure aims to help and protect both Team members * and children. By following the procedure you are acting to:

- ***prevent a problem getting worse,***
- ***safeguard children and young people, and***
- ***reduce the potential risks to others.***

The earlier you raise a concern, the easier and sooner it is possible for the setting to take action.

1. Introduction

The University of Cambridge Primary School is committed to the highest possible standards and recognises that its Team members, students and volunteers are often the first to realise that there may be something wrong within the setting.

However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or they may fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances, it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects workers who raise concerns from victimisation or harassment. In accordance with that Act and its commitment to the highest standards of service delivery, the setting actively encourages its workers with concerns about any aspect of the setting's practice or any adult's, volunteer's or student's conduct to come forward and voice those concerns, in confidence, within the setting rather than overlooking a problem.

2. Objective

The aim of this policy and associated procedures is to establish an internal procedure that will encourage and enable Team members, students and volunteers to raise concerns about any aspect of the setting's practice, (which do not meet the criteria for being dealt with as a complaint or grievance), in confidence and without fear of reprisals, to ensure that the setting continues to work within best practice and safeguard children and young people.

3. Scope

Concerns that should be raised via the whistle-blowing policy may be in relation to the actions/behaviours of other Team members, students or volunteers, or about something that is perceived as:

- unlawful
- failing to comply with the setting's policy and procedures
- poor practice
- improper conduct

4. Principles

This policy is based on the following fundamental principles:

- All Team members, students and volunteers have the right to raise concerns about perceived unacceptable practice or behaviour.
- The responsibility for expressing concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour rests with all Team members, students and volunteers.
- The setting will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take action to protect workers when they raise a concern in good faith.

- The setting will do its best to protect a whistle-blower's identity when he/she raises a concern and does not want his/her name to be disclosed. However, if the concern raised needs to be addressed through another procedure, e.g. disciplinary procedure, the worker may be required to provide a signed statement as part of the evidence.
- In some circumstances the setting may have to disclose the identity of the worker without his/her consent, although this will be discussed with the worker first.
- Appropriate advice and support will be made available to Team members, students and volunteers who raise concerns.
- Those who raise concerns will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation.
- The setting will not tolerate malicious allegations; these may be considered as a disciplinary offence.

5. Procedures

Procedures for reporting and investigating 'whistle-blowing' concerns have been developed to ensure that:

- Team members, students and volunteers can raise concerns (no matter how small they may appear) internally as a matter of course, and receive feedback on any action taken.
- Concerns are taken seriously and dealt with quickly and appropriately.
- Team members and volunteers are reassured that they will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for whistle-blowing in good faith.
- Team members and volunteers can take the matter further if they are dissatisfied with the setting response and seek external advice and guidance.
- Issues raised are addressed via other procedures and policies as appropriate, e.g. safeguarding policy, allegations against an adult working in a setting, grievance, disciplinary, health and safety.
- Appropriate records are maintained for monitoring purposes.

Raising a concern

Team members, students and volunteers should raise concerns with someone they trust and/or the Executive Headteacher and/or Associate Headteacher. Concerns should be raised in writing and include:

- reference to the fact that it is a whistle-blowing disclosure
- the background and history of the concerns
- names, dates and places (where possible)
- the reasons why the individual is concerned about the situation.

Team members who feel unable to put concerns in writing, can meet the Executive Headteacher (and/or Associate Headteacher and/or contact the Chair of Governors if the issue relates to the Executive Headteacher)

Appendix A gives a template for writing a concern

Who should you contact?

You should contact one of the following people in confidence:

James Biddulph (Executive Headteacher) jbiddulph@universityprimaryschool.org.uk or via the school office or seeing him in person in his office
Luke Rolls (Associate Headteacher) lrolls@universityprimaryschool.org.uk or via the school office or seeing him in person in his office
Kirsty Allen (Chair of Governors) via the Clerk to Governors kathryn.mitchell@schoolschoice.org (for matters regarding the Exec Headteacher)

7. Investigation

The action taken will depend on the nature of the concern.

All matters raised, with the exception of allegations of abuse against a Team members, or unlawful activity, will be investigated internally.

The appropriate person/s will investigate the concerns thoroughly, ensuring that a written response can be provided within ten working days.

The response should include details of how the matter was investigated, conclusions drawn from the investigation, and whom to contact should the Team members member be unhappy with the response and wish to raise the matter.

If the investigation cannot be completed within the timescale above, the Team members member should receive a response that indicates:

- progress to date
- how the matter is being dealt with
- how long it will take to provide a final response.

In order to protect individuals, initial enquiries (usually involving a meeting with the individual raising the concern), will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and if so, what form it should take. Concerns or allegations that raise issues that fall within the scope of other policies/procedures, will be addressed under those procedures.

Some concerns may be resolved at this initial stage simply, by agreed action or an explanation regarding the concern, without the need for further investigation.

If you do not feel that the complaint has been dealt with effectively or you still have concerns, you have a right to refer your concerns to Governors or Ofsted.

Allegations of abuse against adults who work or volunteer in the setting

If an allegation is made against a Team member or volunteer, the following action will be taken (as per the 'Allegations of Abuse against Adults who Work or Volunteer in a Childcare Setting' flowchart and guidance):

- The setting will ensure the immediate safety of the children.
- The setting will not investigate and immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be contacted direct).
- The setting will notify Ofsted of a significant incident.
- The LADO will decide if it could be a child protection concern.
- If the LADO decides that there is a child protection concern, external/internal agencies (e.g. police) will be informed by the LADO and the setting will act upon the advice given to ensure that any investigation is not jeopardised.
- It may be necessary for the employer to suspend the alleged perpetrator. Suspension is a neutral act to allow a thorough and fair investigation.
- If it is agreed that there is not a child protection concern, the setting will investigate further and feed back the outcome of the investigation to the LADO.



Appendix A: Raising a Whistleblowing Concern Form

Please complete and hand to the Executive Headteacher or Chair of Governors. If you feel more comfortable, you can email a copy of the completed form. If you prefer not to complete the form, you can meet with the Executive Headteacher and/or Associate Headteacher. For whistleblowing related to the Executive Headteacher please email the Chair of Governors with this form attached.

Your name	Name of adult about whom you are whistleblowing	Your relationship to the adult
Email address		Day time telephone number
Please give an overview of your concern		

Who have you spoken with about the matter?		
What was their response?		
Are you attaching any paperwork/further evidence? If so please give details here.		
Signed		Date
Official Use	Date acknowledgement sent	
	By who	
	Complaint referred to:	
	Signed by:	

What happens next?

- You will not be disadvantaged, victimized or harassed as a result of showing the courage to speak out. You are protected in law.
- You will be given information from the person you raised the whistleblowing concern about action taken, progress of the concern and any resolution.
- If you are not satisfied with the approach taken, you have the right to raise concern with any governor (you can email the clerk to governor kathryn.mitchell@schoolschoice.org)
- Malicious allegations will be treated under the disciplinary policy.

Appendix B:

Whistleblowing

Have you seen or heard something at work that worried you?

Reasons for whistle blowing

- The standards, procedures or practices within the Council
- The actual or potential harmful treatment of service users, particularly children, young people and vulnerable adults
- The behaviour of other employees or managers
- The conduct of a contractor or partner organisation
- Any potential health and safety risks
- Any practice you think breaks the law

How to raise a concern

- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier concern is expressed the easier and sooner it is possible for action to be taken
- Try to pinpoint what practice is concerning you and why
- Approach someone you trust and who you will believe will respond
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response – don't let matters rest
- Ideally you should put your concerns in writing
- A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but you will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern
- In the first instance, raise the issue with the Executive Headteacher and/or the Associate Headteacher. For whistleblowing related to the Executive Headteacher, contact the Clerk to Governors. If you feel you can't do that, contact the Cambridgeshire Council phone numbers in the box in confidence.

**Don't think what if I'm wrong -
think what if I'm right**

James Biddulph, Executive Headteacher

jbiddulph@universityprimaryschool.org.uk

Luke Rolls, Associate Headteacher

lrolls@universityprimaryschool.org.uk

Kathryn Mitchell, Clerk to Governors

Kathryn.Mitchell@SchoolsChoice.org

Cambridgeshire County Council

Whistleblowing Hotline

01908 252525

Jane Atkin, Cambridgeshire County Council

Head of HR

01223 699 495