

# Safeguarding Children

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## Whistleblowing Policy



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Old Catton and White Woman Lane Federation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its pupils and encourages an open and supportive culture. This policy explains the procedures that anyone working here should follow if he or she has concerns that the practice of any adult within the school may be harming pupils. The policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding incorporating Child Protection
- Anti-bullying
- Physical handling
- Handling of allegations made against staff
- Equal Opportunities
- Norfolk County Council's Whistleblowing Policy

### **Principles**

- We all have a duty to protect children and young people from harm.
- Adults working in a school are often the first to realise that the behaviour of someone is causing, or is likely to cause, harm to a child or young person.
- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour in order to protect or reduce the risks to others, to prevent the problem worsening and to protect other staff and the school.
- We recognise that the decision to report a concern is difficult. We will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take all possible measures to protect anyone who raises concerns in good faith.
- If you raise concerns in good faith that are proved to be unfounded, no action will be taken against you.
- Where it is concluded that allegations have been made maliciously, disciplinary action may be taken.
- We recognise that whistleblowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support will be offered by the school in conjunction with Children's Services Personnel and you may wish to contact your trade union.

### **Barriers to whistleblowing**

- Fear of being wrong.
- Fear of reprisal.
- Fear of escalation.
- Fear of damage to career.
- Fear of not being believed.

This policy aims to address these fears.

## Procedures

- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you are able.
- Usually, you should report your concerns to your immediate line manager, the Head of School, an Executive Deputy or the Executive Headteacher, each of whom has the role Designated Professional Lead for Child Protection. Make sure you are satisfied with the response.
- Pinpoint what your concerns are. Ideally, these should be put in writing. Your report, written or verbal, should set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible, and the reason for your concern. You will not be expected to prove the truth of your allegations but you should demonstrate sufficient cause for concern.
- Concerns will be treated in confidence and we will make every effort to maintain your anonymity, if you wish. However, at the appropriate time, you may need to provide evidence.
- You will be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries and supported, as necessary.

## Self-reporting

We recognise that staff may experience difficulties, such as physical or mental ill health or personal problems, which could impinge on their professional competence. Staff should report such difficulties to their manager so that professional and personal support can be offered. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where the difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children and young people.

## Equalities

Our schools provide education for all, acknowledging that the society within which we live is enriched by diversity. As stated in our *Equality Policy*, we strive to ensure that the culture and ethos of our school reflects the diversity of all members of the school community, where everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect and fairness. Pupils are provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity.

Please read this policy in conjunction with The Whistleblowing Policy. This provides further information and advice. The Whistleblowing Policy is taken from the NCC model;

<http://www.eficts.norfolk.gov.uk/finance/fmsis/whistleblowing/>