



# **Whistleblowing Policy**

## **Whistle blowing**

### Introduction

This guidance is written for staff working with children and young people in education settings and should be read in conjunction with the LEA's whistleblowing policy and procedures.

Staff 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 this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children or young people who are targeted.

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

### **What does the policy cover?**

1. How you can raise a concern about safeguarding issues, including concerns about staff.
2. Investigation methods and process administration.
3. Safeguard measures against abuse, bullying, victimisation or harassment, for those raising a concern.
4. How abuse of the policy will be managed.
5. Relevant external bodies contact details.

### **Why have a policy?**

It is possible that you may suspect or witness events which you consider or know to be against school policy. This policy is designed with the intention of safeguarding against the continuation of inappropriate, dangerous or unlawful practice by employees or volunteers.

The policy facilitates the protection of Council resources, practices, and ultimately reputation, by providing employees the opportunity to highlight practices which cause concern, at the appropriate level, within a framework which instructs and protects the individual raising the concern.

### **How can I raise a concern?**

1. You should contact and talk to the headteacher or chair of governors about your concern.
2. If this is not appropriate, you can contact someone more senior in the safeguarding department or talk to a Human Resource Advisor, Social Worker or South East Area Children's Team member.

New York HR advisor is Catherine Moore 0191 643 8085

Talking directly is probably preferable: but you should e-mail, write or telephone your concerns. You have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague of your choice at a meeting.

**Once I have made my concerns known, what can I expect to happen?**

- Your concerns will be clarified to make sure you have been understood.
- Your concerns will be investigated thoroughly and appropriately.
- You will receive a written response within 5 working days, outlining the course of action to be taken/that has been taken.
- You will be kept informed of progress as agreed.
- You will be safeguarded against any associated bullying, victimisation and/or harassment.

**What if I do not want my identity to be known?**

You can raise your concerns anonymously; they will be investigated, but anonymous concerns do not carry the same weight and the policy is designed to encourage open disclosure.

**What will happen if my concern is unfounded?**

If you make an allegation or express a concern in good faith you will not be disciplined if it turns out to be mistaken. A malicious allegation or one made to secure personal gain will be managed through the Corrective and Disciplinary Procedure.

**Further advice and support**

Full details of the North Tyneside's County Council's Confidential Reporting Policy and Procedures can be obtained from the Human Resources Department via the intranet.

It is recognised that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from your line manager, your human resources provider and/or your professional or trade union.