

# Whistleblowing Policy



September 2020

**Headteacher:** Mrs K Trethewy

**Chair of Governors:** Mr C Hammond

Thorpe Primary School welcomes our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

This guidance is written for staff working with children and young people working in education settings and should be read in conjunction with Peterborough City Council Confidential Reporting 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 person who is targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

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

## **Reasons for whistle blowing**

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

## **What stops people from whistle blowing**

- Starting a chain of events which spirals
- Disrupting the work or project
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

## **How to raise a concern**

- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a 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
- Staff who are working from home, self-isolating or absent from school for any reason should still share concerns. This can be done through email or telephone conversation.

*“Any employee who suspects that a child is suffering significant harm or that a child or young person has abused another child/young person should report their concerns and seek advice from Children’s Social Care Referral and Assessment Service at Bayard Place. NSPCC or the Police*

Peterborough City Council Confidential Reporting Policy and Procedures. Annex A 1.2 “

### **What happens next**

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries  
Your employer has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence

### **Self reporting**

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty maybe a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned.

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children

### **Further advice and support**

Full details of the Peterborough City Council's Confidential Reporting Policy and Procedures are obtainable from the HR department

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

***"Absolutely without fail - challenge poor practice or performance. If you ignore or collude with poor practice it makes it harder to sound the alarm when things go wrong"***

With acknowledgement to Sounding the Alarm - Barnardos