



Malmesbury C of E Primary School

Company Number 08483768

Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures

**‘Growing together in wisdom and love; discovering
life in all its fullness.’**

Version: 1.2

Issue date: July 2023
Date of next policy review: July 2025

Malmesbury C of E Primary School
Tetbury Hill
Malmesbury
Wiltshire, SN16 9JR
Tel: 01666 823514

Headteacher: Stephen Heal

E-mail: admin@malmesbury-pri.wilts.sch.uk

Website: www.malmesburyprimaryschool.co.uk

Introduction

1. All schools and academy trusts are required to have appropriate procedures in place for handling whistleblowing and for ensuring school staff and volunteers know who they can contact if they wish to raise a concern.
2. This document explains the types of concerns that can be raised under this procedure, the legal protection for whistle-blowers and how whistleblowing concerns will be handled.
3. This procedure should be followed for any whistleblowing matters raised by employees of the school, volunteers, supply staff and agency workers.
4. The term 'head teacher' has been used throughout this procedure, However, where the head teacher is subject to these procedures, it will be managed by the Chair of the governing body.

Policy Statement

5. The school is committed to the highest possible standards of:
 - openness and inclusiveness
 - accountability and
 - integrity.

What is Whistleblowing?

6. Whistleblowing is when an employee or volunteer raises concerns about poor or unsafe practice, misconduct and/or potential failures in the school's systems and processes.
7. The wrongdoing disclosed must be in the public interest. This means it must affect others, e.g., pupils, general public
8. The wrongdoing must relate to or show one of the following:
 - a criminal offence
 - a failure to comply with a legal obligation
 - a possible miscarriage of justice
 - a Health & Safety risk
 - actions causing, or likely to cause damage to the environment
 - misuse of public money
 - corruption or unethical conduct
 - failing to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
 - deliberate concealment of any of these matters
 - any other substantial and relevant concern.

9. The concern could be about something that happened in the past, is currently happening or likely to happen in the future.
10. Concerns or complaints that employees wish to raise formally, about their own employment, should normally be raised using the school's Grievance Procedure, unless the employee believes the concern is in the public interest. This includes for example, concerns related to working conditions, working relations, employment rights or bullying or harassment.

Aim of procedure

11. Encourage those working and volunteering in the school to report suspected wrongdoing promptly, in the knowledge that it will be taken seriously.
12. Provide guidance on how to raise concerns
13. Reassure staff that they are able to raise genuine concerns made in the public interest without fear of reprisals, even if they turn out to be mistaken

Legal protection for whistle blowers

14. It can be difficult for an employee or worker to make the decision to report a concern. If a concern is raised in good faith and based on reasonable belief, there should be nothing to fear.
15. The school will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect an individual when they raise a concern even if they are genuinely mistaken in their concerns. Any harassment or victimisation of a whistleblower would result in disciplinary action against the person responsible.
16. Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) 1998, workers are protected from dismissal or other detriment as long as they follow their employers whistleblowing procedure. Any investigations arising from whistleblowing will not influence or be influenced by any other procedures to which an employee may be subject.

False and malicious allegations

17. The school will protect itself and its employees from false and malicious expressions of concern by taking disciplinary action where appropriate.

The school will try to ensure that the negative impact of either malicious or unfounded allegation about any person is minimised.

Procedure for raising a whistleblowing concern

18. Concerns can be raised anonymously, but the school or person receiving the allegation may not be able to take it further if they haven't been provided with all the information they need.
19. Whistle blowers can give their name but request confidentiality and, in these circumstances, every effort will be made to protect their identity.
20. Where an employee has requested that their identity is not to be revealed, the school will discuss the matter with them before embarking on any course of action whereby their identity will need to be disclosed.
21. All disclosures made under this procedure will be treated sensitively, consistently, and fairly.

Step 1- Reporting the concern

22. Concerns can be raised verbally or in writing.
23. You can raise your concern with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Alternatively, you can raise the matter with the head teacher. If you are raising a concern about the head teacher then the matter should go directly to the Chair of Governors.
24. Where a staff member or volunteer feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:
25. If you wish to report the matter to someone outside of the school, you can contact:
 - the Head of School Effectiveness at Wiltshire Council or
 - any of the other local authority officers listed in Annex 1 or
 - one of the external bodies/organisations listed in Annex 2.
 - the [NSPCC's whistleblowing helpline](#) – it is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk.
26. Reporting concerns to the media, in most cases will lead to the loss of your whistleblowing law rights.

27. Although you are not expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of your concerns, you will need to demonstrate that you have sufficient evidence or other reasonable grounds to raise them.
28. You may wish to obtain advice from a trade union representative or the Citizen's Advice Bureau.
29. You can be accompanied by a trade union representative or colleague to any meetings that are required.

Step 2

30. The person with whom you have raised your concern, will decide what action is needed. They may ask you to provide further information. They will write to you within 10 working days to let you know how your concern will be dealt with.
31. The information you can expect to receive is:
 - an indication of how the concern will be dealt with
 - an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response
 - whether any initial enquiries have been made
 - whether further investigations will take place, and if not why
 - information about support available for you.
32. The person with whom you have raised your concern will at the same time notify the schools' HR Adviser that a whistleblowing allegation has been made.
33. Advice on dealing with concerns is available from the school's HR Adviser.

Step 3

34. Initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate.
35. An investigation may be carried out, depending on the nature of the allegations and the evidence/information presented. Full details of the investigation may be withheld from you to protect the confidentiality of other people.
36. Information will need to be passed on to those with a legitimate need to have this information and it may be necessary for you to provide a

written statement and act as a witness in any subsequent disciplinary proceedings or enquiry. This will be discussed with you first.

37. Where an investigation is necessary, it may take the form of one or more of the following:
- an internal investigation by the head teacher or a governor, which may, for example, take the form of a disciplinary investigation
 - an investigation by the Internal Audit Service
 - a referral to the Police
 - the setting up of an external independent inquiry.

Step 4

38. You will be informed of the outcome of any investigation, in writing, and/or of any action taken, subject to the constraints of confidentiality and the law.
39. If you do not feel your concern has been addressed adequately you may raise it with an independent body such as:
- the Head of School Effectiveness at Wiltshire Council or
 - any of the other local authority officers listed in Annex 1 or
 - one of the external bodies/organisations listed in Annex 2.
40. If there is an issue of an exceptionally serious nature which you believe to be substantially true, then you may disclose the issue to someone other than those listed in paragraph 21. In determining whether it is reasonable for you to have made a disclosure the identity of the person to whom the disclosure is made will be taken into account. Disclosures to anyone outside of the recognised bodies listed in paragraphs 35 and Annex 1 and 2 may not be protected disclosures under the Act.
41. You have a duty to the school not to disclose confidential information. This does not prevent you from seeking independent advice at any stage or from discussing the issue with the charity Protect (previously called Public Concern at Work) on 020 3117 2520 or www.protect-advice.org.uk in accordance with the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Review and Reporting of the Procedure

42. Overall responsibility for this procedure lies with the Academy Trust.
43. This procedure has been reviewed with reference to equalities, human rights and discrimination legislation. Confidential monitoring of the procedure is undertaken in order to gather data to help establish whether the procedure is operated in a fair and consistent manner. In undertaking monitoring the school will not identify individuals.

44. This procedure will be regularly reviewed by the HR Department to ensure that it continues to remain compliant and meets the needs of schools and those working in schools.

Annex 1 - Contact list for Wiltshire County Council

Address:	Wiltshire Council, County Hall
HR Operations Manager	Jane.margetts@wiltshire.gov.uk
Director of Education and Skills	Helean.hughes@wiltshire.gov.uk
Head of School Effectiveness	Andrew.best@wiltshire.gov.uk
Health and Safety Team for Schools	Paul.collyer@wiltshire.gov.uk
Strategic Financial Support Manager Finance & Procurement	Grant.davis@wiltshire.gov.uk

Policy adoption

Signed Steve Heal
(Headteacher):



Date:

July 2023

Signed Laurence Mussett
(Chair of Governors):



Date:

July 2023