



# WORKS 4 U

## Whistle Blowing Policy

## Foreword

This protocol has been developed by Works4u SMT, in consultation with the Advisory board of Works4U

## Introduction

Works4U is committed to the highest professional and ethical standards. This protocol encourages staff to raise concerns of malpractice, illegal acts, or omissions within a culture of openness and accountability—especially regarding the well-being and safeguarding of young people with EHCPs.

## Aim

To:

- Provide a safe avenue for staff to raise concerns and receive feedback.
- Enable escalation if there's dissatisfaction with the response.
- Protect staff from retaliation when 'whistleblowing' in good faith.

## Objectives

This protocol:

- Reinforces ethical, honest, high-standard practices.
- Enhances a culture of openness, accountability, and integrity.
- Encourages internal reporting—reducing the need for external disclosures.
- Supports efficient, safe service delivery, preserving public confidence.

## Scope

Covers concerns under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) including:

- Criminal offences.
- Legal breaches.
- Miscarriage of justice.
- Health and safety risks.
- Environmental harm.
- Concealment of any above.

Additionally, specific to safeguarding and working with young people with EHCPs, this includes:

- Malpractice or ill-treatment of learners.
- Fraud, safety breaches, recruitment misconduct.

- Safeguarding-related issues including peer-on-peer harm, online safety, abuse, neglect, or unsafe practices.

## Legal and Safeguarding Framework

- Aligned with **PIDA / Employment Rights Act 1996** protections [GOV.UK UK Research Integrity Office](#).
- Reflects **DfE guidance on whistleblowing disclosures** for post-16 providers (June 10 2025) [GOV.UK+1](#).
- Incorporates **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025**—related updates, effective September 2025, including online safety nuances (misinformation, disinformation, AI) [Blake Morgan NSPCC Learning GOV.UK](#).

## Confidentiality

Concerns raised in confidence will be handled sensitively. While every effort will be made to protect identities, investigation requirements may necessitate disclosure. Staff will be informed before any such step.

## Designated Officer

The Advisory Board will appoint an impartial **Designated Officer**—a Senior Management Team member—responsible for handling concerns appropriately.

## Anonymous Allegations

Anonymous concerns are discouraged but may be considered at the Designated Officer's discretion. Weight will be given to:

- Seriousness of the issue.
- Credibility of the allegation.
- Ability to corroborate through other sources.

## Untrue Allegations

Allegations made in good faith but unsubstantiated will not lead to action against the whistleblower. Malicious or vexatious claims, however, may result in disciplinary consequences.

## How to Raise a Concern

1. **Informal route:** Speak to your immediate line manager, who will refer the concern to the Designated Officer.
2. If that person is implicated, escalate to:
  - Designated Officer → Principal.
  - Designated Officer or Principal → Chair of Advisory Board → Director for Children and Young People (or Diocesan Officer for Voluntary Aided institutions).
3. **Written confirmation:** Provide details—background, incidents, dates, names.
4. If unable to write initially, arrange a meeting with the Designated Officer.

5. **Support options:** Guidance may be sought from HR (Children’s Services), trade unions, or professional bodies. These representatives have the same protection if acting under this protocol.

### Response from Advisory Board

- **Within 5 working days:** Acknowledge receipt of the concern.
- **Within 10 working days:** Outline how the concern will be handled, timeline, initial steps, and whether a full investigation is needed.

Possible outcomes:

- No further action.
- Internal investigation.
- Referral to external bodies (e.g., the police, external auditor).
- Independent inquiry.

### The Investigation Process

Initial enquiries determine if a formal investigation is needed. Safeguarding issues may trigger child protection procedures. Investigations may involve confidentiality and, when necessary, suspension under disciplinary policy.

If a case proceeds, disciplinary or capability procedures will apply. Results will be shared with the whistleblower and Chair or Principal—excluding personal disciplinary details.

### Records

Records of concerns, investigations, and resolutions will be maintained securely for at least **12 months**. (You may consider extending retention given the age group if appropriate.)

### Further Recourse

If dissatisfied, the whistleblower may contact:

- DfE via the Customer Help Portal (with identity) or complaint route (anonymous) for colleges or training providers [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Statutory protection applies when disclosed in good faith and in public interest.