

Gladstone Primary Academy

Whistle Blowing Policy

This policy applies to all staff and children from EYFS to Year 6 (including Nurture Provision)



Chair of Governors: Mrs Christine Bartley
Headteacher: Mrs Elaine Preston

Policy update: February 2016
Policy Updated: November 2016 (in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2016)

Whistle Blowing Policy to Safeguard and Support the Welfare of Children.

This policy applies to all pupils at Gladstone Primary School from EYFS to Y6

In line with the expectations of the Stoke-on-Trent, Gladstone Primary School is committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity and accountability. All persons working for, or with this organisation, must feel safe and supported in order to express their concerns.

This policy document is intended to encourage and enable our staff to raise their concerns and to do so without fear of victimisation or discrimination. It does not replace the Complaints Procedure or the Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures Policy or the organisation's standard procedures for reporting allegations or concerns about staff or volunteers. It is supplementary to the organisation's Whistle Blowing Policy in regards to other forms of malpractice covered under the 'Public Interest Disclosure Act'.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) protects the public interest by providing a remedy for individuals who suffer workplace reprisal for raising a genuine concern, whether it is a concern about child safeguarding and welfare systems, financial malpractice, danger, illegality, or other wrongdoing. The concern may relate to something that is happening or has happened in the past. The PIDA covers all workers, including temporary agency staff. It does not cover the self-employed or volunteers. The Act also provides protection should individuals have difficulty gaining a reference from an employer because they have raised a concern. It makes it clear that any clause in a contract that purports to gag an individual from raising a concern that would be protected under the Act is void.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Encourage adults working for or within the organisation to feel confident in raising concerns;
- Provide a process by which concerns can be raised and dealt with;
- Receive feedback on the process (where appropriate); and
- Provide a means by which staff can receive support where concerns have been raised.

What does the Safeguarding Whistle Blowing Policy Cover?

This policy is designed to cover concerns that staff have about the conduct of individuals in a position of trust within the organisation which could be detrimental to the safety or wellbeing of young people and where staff, for whatever reason, *feel unable* to raise them under the organisation's standard child protection procedures around dealing with such allegations. It would include issues about:

- Unprofessional behaviour
- Bullying by staff

- Any form of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional or neglect)
- Name calling
- Personal contact with children and young people which is contrary to the organisations policies and codes of conduct
- Any form of racial abuse
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- Knowledge about an individual's personal circumstances which may relate to safeguarding

Safeguarding Against Harassment or Victimisation

Gladstone Primary School is committed to professional standards and to supporting staff. It is recognised that the decision to report a concern is a difficult one to make. Harassment or victimisation will not be tolerated and Gladstone Primary School will take appropriate action in order to protect the person raising the concern when they are acting in good faith.

Confidentiality

All concerns will be treated in confidence, however, there may be a need for the whistle blower to give evidence e.g. if they have witnessed a crime or in regard to disciplinary procedures if this is the outcome.

Anonymous Allegations

This policy encourages staff to raise concerns to be identified in doing so as part of their professional role/responsibility. However, anonymous allegations will be investigated as thoroughly as possible.

False Allegations

If staff raise a concern in good faith which is not confirmed by an investigation, no action will be taken. However, if a concern is raised maliciously, disciplinary action may be taken.

How to Raise a Concern

Staff should normally raise their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the schools standard procedures for dealing with allegations about a person in a position of trust. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is **Mrs E Preston**, The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is **Mrs C Annese**. If the Designated Person is the subject of concern the matter should be referred to the Chair of Governors. To contact Mrs Bartley the Office Staff can request that C Bartley rings the identified person. Under standard procedures, if there are concerns that an adult working with children may have abused a child, or be unsuitable to work with children and young people, concerns will be passed to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

For more information about the Stoke-on-Trent LADO process, please use the appropriate link [stoke.gov.uk/Managing Allegations LADO.pdf](http://stoke.gov.uk/Managing_Allegations_LADO.pdf)

In certain circumstances, staff may feel they are unable to follow the organisation's standard procedures e.g. because they feel their position in the organisation would be in jeopardy, they

would be subject to intimidation, or that the person of concern is the designated manager to whom they should report such matters and there is no one senior to refer to. They should then follow the Whistle Blowing Policy by contacting a nominated person (the 'responsible person') within the organisation or an umbrella organisation to which the organisation is affiliated. The Policy may also be used in circumstances when the matter has been raised under appropriate organisation procedures for referring child protection concerns, but the referrer considers that the manager has not taken the concerns seriously or acted appropriately with relation to them. In such circumstances, referrers are encouraged to contact the named responsible person for 'whistle blowing' for the organisation or a LADO directly for discussion and advice. **The LADO contact details are Dylan Harrison Telephone 235100 or 235885.**

When following the Whistle-blowing Policy, concerns may be shared verbally, but should also be recorded in writing on the Schools Proforma for Recording Safeguarding Concerns. This must be handed directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Staff may wish to invite their trade union representative to be present during any interviews.

Gladstone Primary will respond:

Any concern regarding child protection will be referred to external agencies for investigation (children's services, police, LADO).

If the concern is not of this nature there will be:

- Investigation by the SLT
- Disciplinary process if appropriate
- Consideration of policies, processes and procedures if such issues arise from the investigation.

Within 10 working days of a concern being raised the referrer will receive a written response from the responsible person which will:

- Acknowledge that the concern has been received;
- Supply information on relevant support mechanisms
- Advise whether further investigations will take place; or
- Advise that no further action has taken place and why.

Who to contact

Mrs E Preston (Designated Safeguarding Lead), Mrs C Annese (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead). Mrs Bartley is to be contacted of (Chair of Governors), if the concern was regarding the Safeguarding Lead.

Staff must also be aware and take into account any conflicts of interests when disclosing information, eg, family relationships in school.

If it is felt that it would be unsafe for any reason to share concerns with the named person from your organisation the following are appropriate contacts with whom to discuss your concerns:

Stoke on Trent Authority:

- Individual designated agency leads for Child Protection**
- Advice and Referral Team (ART) – 01782 235100**
- Education Safeguarding Officer (Dawn Casewell) – 01782 235897**
- LADO Officer (Dylan Harrison) – 01782 235885**

Other support

Recognised trade unions or professional associations can provide support and assistance or independent, external advice this can be obtained from the charity Public Concern at Work 020 7404 6609, or by email at whistle@pcaw.org.uk. For further information please see their website at www.pcaw.co.uk.

Regulatory bodies such as Ofsted will also give advice.
Ofsted's whistle blowing hotline is: 0300 123 3155.