



**The White House Preparatory School
and
Woodentops Day Nursery**

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

1. Context & Statutory Duty

This policy provides a framework for staff, contractors, and volunteers to raise concerns regarding malpractice, wrongdoing, or safeguarding risks without fear of victimisation, harassment, or disadvantage.

In line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) and the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA), disclosures are legally protected where the worker reasonably believes that the disclosure is made **in the public interest** and concerns qualifying categories of wrongdoing.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all employees, agency staff, volunteers, contractors, suppliers, and service providers. It covers major concerns that fall outside standard grievance or complaints procedures, including:

- Physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, neglect, or harm towards pupils or staff
- Failures to comply with statutory safeguarding guidance or duties
- Criminal offences or breaches of law
- Health and safety risks to pupils, staff, or the public
- Financial corruption, fraud, bribery, or miscarriages of justice
- Concealment or cover-ups relating to any of the above

3. Safeguarding & LADO Thresholds

If a concern involves the behaviour of a staff member, volunteer, or contractor towards a pupil, it must be reported immediately to the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). If the concern involves the Headteacher, it must be reported directly to the Principal, Vice Principal, or Proprietor.

In accordance with KCSIE, the school will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) immediately—and before any internal investigation is conducted—whenever it is alleged that a person working in or with the school has:



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- Harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm; or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children (including transferable risk outside of school).

Low-Level Concerns: Concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold above must be reported and recorded under the Low-Level Concerns framework detailed within the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

4. Safeguards & Protection

- **Victimisation & Harassment:** The school will not tolerate victimisation, harassment, or detriment against anyone raising a reasonable belief in the public interest. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against anyone attempting to deter or penalise a whistleblower.
- **Confidentiality:** All disclosures will be treated confidentially. The school will make every effort not to reveal an individual's identity without consent, unless required by statutory safeguarding processes or legal proceedings.
- **Anonymous Disclosures:** Staff are strongly encouraged to put their name to an allegation. Anonymous concerns are harder to investigate but will be considered at the school's discretion, taking into account the seriousness, credibility, and likelihood of confirmation from attributable sources.
- **Unfounded or Malicious Disclosures:** If an allegation is made in the public interest but is not confirmed by investigation, no action will be taken. If an allegation is shown to be frivolous, malicious, or made for personal gain, disciplinary procedures may apply.

5. How to Raise a Concern Internally

- **First Step:** Concerns should usually be raised with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) or the Headteacher.
- **Escalation:** If the concern involves the Headteacher, it must be raised directly with the Principal, Vice Principal, or the Governing Body/Proprietor.
- **Format:** Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. Written reports should detail:
 - The background and history of the concern (with relevant dates)



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- The specific reasons why you are concerned about the situation
- **Support:** Anyone raising a concern may be accompanied by a trade union representative, professional association representative, or colleague during meetings or interviews.

6. How the School Will Respond

Within **ten working days** of receiving a concern, the lead investigator will write to the individual to:

- Acknowledge receipt of the concern
- Indicate how the school proposes to handle the matter
- Provide an estimate of how long a full response will take
- Confirm whether initial enquiries have been made
- Outline available staff support mechanisms (e.g., Occupational Health or counseling services)
- State whether further internal or external investigations will take place (and if not, why)

Depending on initial enquiries, matters may be referred to the LADO, the Police, external auditors, or an independent investigator.

7. Raising Concerns Externally

While the school encourages internal reporting, staff have a statutory right to raise concerns directly with external bodies at any stage—particularly if they feel unable to raise the issue internally, feel unsafe, or believe a concern was not properly addressed.

Authorised external contact points include:

- **NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline:** 0800 028 0285 | help@nspcc.org.uk
- **Protect (Independent Whistleblowing Charity):** 020 3117 2520 | protect-advice.org.uk
- **Ofsted Whistleblowing Hotline:** 0300 123 3155 | whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk
- **Department for Education (DfE):** 0370 000 2288
- **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):** Contact details available via the local Safeguarding Children Partnership (Lambeth LADO team)
- **The Police** (where a crime is suspected or a child is in immediate danger)



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PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Policy will be reviewed every 2 years			
Policy reviewed:	Sept 26	By:	Principal & Headteacher
To be reviewed:	Sept 28	By:	Principal & Headteacher



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