



St Margaret's CE VA Primary School: Whistleblowing Policy

Policy Status: Draft

Date of Issue: June 2025

Review Date: June 2026

1. Introduction and Purpose

This Whistleblowing Policy is designed to provide a framework for all staff, governors, volunteers, contractors, parents, and pupils at St Margaret's CE VA Primary School to raise concerns about wrongdoing or malpractice within the school without fear of reprisal. It aims to promote a culture of openness, transparency, and accountability, ensuring that concerns are addressed promptly and appropriately. This policy is in line with the Academy Trust Handbook 2023 and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2024 guidelines.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all individuals working at or associated with St Margaret's CE VA Primary School, including:

- All members of staff (teaching and non-teaching)
- Governors
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Trainees
- Pupils
- Parents/Carers
- Any other individual associated with the school

This policy covers any genuine concerns about potential wrongdoing, malpractice, or failures within the school, including but not limited to:

- Financial irregularities or fraud
- Breaches of legal or regulatory requirements
- Endangering the health and safety of pupils or staff
- Safeguarding concerns (as per KCSiE 2024)
- Abuse of power or authority
- Unethical conduct
- Discrimination or harassment



- Damage to the environment
- Criminal offences

3. Principles of the Policy

- **Confidentiality:** All concerns raised will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, within the constraints of the law and the need to investigate the matter thoroughly.
- **Protection from Victimisation:** The school is committed to protecting whistleblowers from any form of reprisal, victimisation, or detriment as a result of raising a genuine concern.
- **Objectivity and Fairness:** All concerns will be investigated objectively and fairly, with due regard to the rights of all parties involved.
- **Proportionality:** The response to a concern will be proportionate to the seriousness and nature of the issue raised.
- **Transparency:** The whistleblower will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of the investigation, where appropriate and permitted by law.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- **All Staff:** Are responsible for being aware of this policy and for raising any genuine concerns about wrongdoing or malpractice.
- **Headteacher:** Is responsible for receiving and managing whistleblowing concerns, ensuring investigations are conducted promptly and fairly, and taking appropriate action. Where the concern relates to the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors should be notified.
- **Chair of Governors:** Is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, ensuring that concerns about the Headteacher are addressed appropriately, and reporting serious concerns to the relevant authorities.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Is responsible for ensuring that any safeguarding concerns raised through this policy are handled in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures and KCSiE 2024.
- **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):** In the event of a concern/allegation about the headteacher, or a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer(s) LADO(s).

5. Reporting a Concern

Concerns should be raised as soon as possible after the individual becomes aware of the issue. Concerns can be raised in writing, by email, or verbally.

- **Internal Reporting:**
 - In most cases, concerns should be raised with the Headteacher.
 - If the concern relates to the Headteacher, it should be raised with the Chair of Governors.



- If the concern relates to the Chair of Governors, it should be raised with another designated Governor or the Diocese of Lichfield.
- Safeguarding concerns should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- **External Reporting:**
 - If the whistleblower feels unable to raise the concern internally, or believes that their concerns have not been adequately addressed, they may report the matter to an external body, such as:
 - The Local Authority
 - The Diocese of Lichfield
 - Ofsted
 - The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
 - The Police
 - The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line (0800 028 0285)
 - The whistleblowing charity Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work)

6. Investigation Process

- The Headteacher (or Chair of Governors, if applicable) will acknowledge receipt of the concern within 5 working days.
- An initial assessment will be conducted to determine the seriousness and credibility of the concern.
- A thorough investigation will be carried out, which may involve interviewing relevant individuals, reviewing documents, and gathering evidence.
- The investigation will be conducted objectively and impartially.
- The whistleblower will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation, where appropriate and permitted by law.
- A written report will be prepared, outlining the findings of the investigation and any recommendations for action.
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7. Outcomes and Actions

Following the investigation, appropriate action will be taken, which may include:

- Disciplinary action against individuals found to have engaged in wrongdoing.
- Changes to school policies or procedures.
- Training for staff.
- Referral to external authorities.
- No further action, if the investigation finds no evidence of wrongdoing.

The whistleblower will be informed of the outcome of the investigation, where appropriate and permitted by law.



8. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All information relating to whistleblowing concerns will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Access to this information will be restricted to those individuals who need to know it in order to investigate and address the concern.

9. Protection from Victimisation

St Margaret's CE VA Primary School is committed to protecting whistleblowers from any form of reprisal, victimisation, or detriment as a result of raising a genuine concern. Any act of victimisation will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body, in consultation with the Headteacher and other relevant stakeholders, to ensure that it remains effective and compliant with relevant legislation and best practises.

11. Communication and Training

This policy will be made available to all staff, governors, volunteers, contractors, parents, and pupils through the school website, staff handbook, and other appropriate channels. Training will be provided to staff on the policy and its implementation.

12. Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct