

This document should be read and understood in conjunction with the following documents:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (July 2015)**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2015)**
- **Child Protection Policy**
- **Equality Policy**
- **Disciplinary Procedures**
- **Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults working with Children and Young People**
- **HR Model Recruitment Policy**
- **Schools HR Practice Guidance – Dealing with anonymous complaints**
- **Secure Data Handling**
- **School's Code of Conduct for Staff**

Principles

Christ Church Primary School is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. Our Whistle Blowing Policy supports this commitment. It gives employees and others with genuine concerns about malpractice or wrongdoing in the school, a way to voice those concerns without fear of victimisation

Sometimes people are reluctant to act upon their concerns because they think that they are being disloyal, or because they are afraid that they might be victimised if they speak up. The purpose of this policy is to provide you with the help and support you need to speak up and be confident that you can do so safely. We will take your concerns seriously and ensure that they are dealt with promptly and fairly

Policy

How to raise a concern:

Who to contact:

- If your complaint is about a member of staff, speak or write to either the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher or the Chair of the Governor's.
- If your complaint is about the actions of the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher, speak or write to the Chair of the Governor's.
- If your complaint is about the actions of a Governor, speak or write to the Head Teacher or Chair of the Governor's.
- If your complaint is about the actions of the Chair of the Governor's, speak or write to the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher

The Procedures after your initial contact:

- you will receive a response within 5 working days (term time)
- two of the above 3 members will discuss the concerns and
- you will be asked to meet in person to discuss your concerns. Before the meeting, it would be helpful if you write down what you consider the problem to be, giving names, dates and places where possible. If there are any other documents that you think might be helpful, please try to bring these with you.

Procedures following the initial meeting:

- We will write to you within 5 days of your initial meeting to:
 - acknowledge that your concern has been received
 - outline our understanding of what the issues are and
 - indicate how we propose to deal with the matter if appropriate.
- If the Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher/Chair of Governors decides that it is appropriate for an investigation to be carried out, advice from the Local Authority (LA) will be sought and followed.
- Where it is necessary to safeguard children or vulnerable adults, the appropriate procedures will be followed. In addition, where it is established that the complaint involves issues of bullying or unlawful discrimination, it will be necessary to seek appropriate professional advice.
- If an investigation is carried out, you will always be informed of the final outcome. It might not be possible to give you full details of the outcome if it contains personal details of a third party, because we have a duty to protect personal information under the Data Protection Act

Anonymous allegations:

- You are encouraged to raise your concern in person, because concerns that are expressed anonymously are difficult to investigate.
 - As a general rule and in line with guidance from Wiltshire LA Human Resources Department, it is best practice that "anonymous complaints" should not be followed up with action against any named individuals. Criticism or complaints of this sort should only be used as a part of reviewing a "bigger picture" or in cases where the employer would be vulnerable by not investigating further.
 - Whilst anonymous allegations against named persons by letter are rare and most can easily be dismissed as vexatious or unfounded, there are however a few circumstances where a preliminary informal investigation is appropriate to establish the facts. These would include:
 - A statutory breach,
 - A criminal act - including fraud
 - Child protection concerns
 - In the case of anonymous complaints therefore, the employer or responsible authority needs to consider:
 - the seriousness of the issues raised;
 - the credibility of the allegation; and
 - the likelihood of being able to confirm the allegation from attributable sources.
 - This means that a minority of anonymous issues need to be looked at if only for reassurances to the employer that nothing is amiss but cannot go into any formal process unless there is clear factual evidence that the complaint which has been raised anonymously is true.

How will the school treat whistleblowers?

- If you make an allegation in good faith but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If you knowingly make malicious allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against you
- Disciplinary action will be taken against any member of staff who tries to stop another employee from raising a concern or who is responsible for any act of recrimination or victimisation against an employee who raises a concern
- If you raise a concern, you will be given the opportunity to feed back any issues or problems you may have experienced as a result. This will take place outside your line management structure. The purpose of this is to ensure that employees who have raised concerns in good faith do not suffer as a result