



Sheep Dip Lane  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Whistleblowing Policy

## Spring 2017

Policy ratified on:	13/01/2016		
Date for review:	January 2017	February 2018	
Signed Chair of Governors	J Thomas		
Signed Head Teacher	F Parish		

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## Sheep Dip Lane Primary School: Whistleblowing Policy adapted from the DMBC Model

Reviewed: January 2016, January 2017

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Sheep Dip Lane Primary School is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment we expect employees, volunteers and anyone associated with the school with serious concerns about any aspect of the school to come forward and voice those concerns. It is recognised that certain cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis. This policy document makes it clear that staff can do so without fear of reprisals. It is intended to encourage and enable staff to raise serious concerns within the school.

This policy applies to all employees, acknowledges and incorporates the specific statutory rights and protection given to employees by the Employment Rights Act 1996 as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which applies to certain kinds of disclosure termed “protected disclosure”

- You must act in the public interest when making a disclosure; the disclosure of information must be in your reasonable belief be in the public interest. The predominant reason for making a disclosure must be to rectify one of the wrongs contained in the list of qualifying disclosures. You do not have to specifically prove anything in order to have your concerns about wrongdoing investigated - the message the school wishes to give to you is ‘if in doubt – raise it’. Employees are expected to co-operate fully with any investigation.
- The provisions of this policy are not directly available to members of the public. Members of the public, who wish to raise a concern about any aspect of the school, including wrongdoing, should follow the [Complaints Procedure](#).

### Aims and Scope of this Policy

This policy aims to:

- Encourage the internal reporting of wrongdoing in a safe and constructive manner;
- Identify ways to report concerns to the appropriate regulator or outside body;
- Provide avenues for you to raise concerns about wrongdoing and receive feedback on any action taken by the school in response to your concerns;
- Allow you to take the matter further if you are dissatisfied with the school’s response to your concerns;
- Reassure you that provided you disclose your concerns appropriately and in accordance with this policy you will be protected from reprisals or victimisation.

All organisations face the risk of things going wrong or of unknowingly harbouring wrongdoers. The school believes it has a duty to identify such situations and take the appropriate measures to remedy

the situation. By encouraging a culture of openness the school believes it can help prevent wrongdoing occurring both now and in the future.

- This policy supplements and does not replace the complaints procedure. There are existing procedures in place to enable you to lodge a grievance relating to your own employment and other procedures established to deal with harassment and with health and safety concerns. This whistleblowing policy is intended to cover concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures.
- Any concern that you have about wrongdoing within the school can and should be reported under this policy. If you fail to report your concerns, you could by your silence become implicated in the wrongdoing. You must fully co-operate with any investigation that is instigated.
- All concerns reported, by whatever method, will be treated in confidence and will be reviewed and investigated by a member of staff deemed to be appropriate and best placed to do so. This may mean that, depending on the level, type and details of the concerns you raise, that your concerns are investigated by Governors, Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and/or members of the SLT or in the case of very serious concerns, Social Services or the Police.
- By knowing about wrongdoing at an early stage, the school has the chance to take the necessary steps to safeguard its interests. The message the school wishes to give you is that you must not hesitate to “blow the whistle” on wrongdoing.

If your concern is in relation to any wrongdoing to Children, the school will follow/refer to the Safeguarding procedure.

### **Contracts of Employment**

Employees are precluded from being able to whistleblow about breaches of their own employment contract, complaints about breaches of employee’s own contracts of employment should be raised as a grievance.

### **Unprotected Disclosure**

Whilst the school would wish you to raise any concerns you have about wrongdoing within the Council, if your disclosure does not meet the requirements of a “protected disclosure”, you will not be able to rely upon the protection of the Employment Rights Act 1996 as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

For example, it is unlikely that raising a concern about wrongdoing to the media would qualify as a “protected disclosure”.

### **Harassment or Victimisation**

The school recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal from those responsible for the malpractice or from those suspected of malpractice. The school will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take action to protect you when you raise a concern.

Whistleblowers will be protected from suffering a detriment, bullying or harassment from other employees. If you have any concerns about colleagues treatment because of whistleblowing you should report this immediately.

## **Confidentiality**

The school will do its best to protect your identity when you raise a concern and do not want your name to be disclosed. However, it must be appreciated that the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by you may be required as part of the evidence.

## **Anonymous Allegations**

Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful and therefore, this policy encourages you to put your name to your allegation. Anonymous allegations will be considered and any action taken at the discretion of the school.

In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account would include:

- the seriousness of the issues raised
- the credibility of the concern
- the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

## **Untrue Allegations**

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you make allegations not in good faith, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

## **Procedure**

- As a first step, you should raise concerns with your immediate line manager/KS Leader. However, dependent on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is thought to be involved in the issue, you may wish to raise your concerns directly with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher
- Although concerns about wrongdoing can be raised orally or in writing you are encouraged to put your concerns in writing. You are advised to set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible, and the reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation. If you do not feel able to put your concern in writing, you can meet with the appropriate person who will agree a written statement with you.
- You must fully co-operate with any investigation that is instigated,
- The earlier you express your concern; the easier it may be to take action.
- In all circumstances it should be made clear that you are raising these concerns under the “Whistleblowing” Policy.
- You may invite your recognised trade union representative to raise a matter on your behalf.

## **Externally**

If you feel unable to raise your concerns about wrongdoing internally or feel dissatisfied with an internal investigation into your concerns, the school acknowledges that you may be justified in referring to the DMBC Whistleblowing Policy, (Appendix 1).