



WILLIAM FARR

C of E Comprehensive School

Whistleblowing Policy

October 2025

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Vision and Values

At William Farr Church of England Comprehensive School, our vision is to enable every member of our community to experience "life in all its fullness" (John 10:10) through exceptional education, encouragement, and effort. We are committed to excellence, ensuring all students and staff are known, valued, and supported to achieve their potential.

Our core values guide everything we do:

Compassion | Friendship | Perseverance | Respect | Responsibility | Wisdom

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Encourage you to feel confident in raising concerns and that these will be taken seriously
 - Provide information on and avenues for you to raise concerns and receive appropriate feedback
 - Set out clear procedures for how the school will respond to such concerns
 - Ensure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue them if you are not satisfied
 - Reassure you that you will be protected from any reprisals or victimisation by the school, if you have reasonable belief that the matter disclosed tends to show wrongdoing and you have made the disclosure in an appropriate manner and in good faith.
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Definition of Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing covers concerns made that report wrongdoing that is 'in the public interest' and which counts as a 'qualifying disclosure'. Examples include (but aren't limited to):

- Criminal offences, such as fraud or corruption
- Failure to comply with legal obligations
- Breaches of financial management procedures or school policies
- The school breaking the law (e.g., lacking required insurance)
- Miscarriage of justice
- Endangerment of health & safety
- Environmental damage
- Deliberate concealment of any of the above

A whistleblower is someone who raises a genuine concern relating to these issues and should not be viewed as a troublemaker.

Not all concerns about the school count as whistleblowing. For example, personal staff grievances such as bullying or harassment do not usually count as whistleblowing. If something affects you as an individual staff member, or relates to an individual employment contract, this is likely a grievance.

When you have a concern, you should consider whether it would be better to follow our staff grievance or complaints procedures.

Procedure for staff to raise a whistle-blowing concern

When to raise a concern

Consider whether the issue involves illegality, breaches of statutory or school procedures, risks to people's safety, or attempts to cover up wrongdoing.

Who to report to

- Report concerns to the Headteacher.
- If the concern involves the Headteacher or they are implicated, report to the Chair of Trustees.

How to raise the concern

- Concerns should be made in writing where possible.
 - Include names, dates, places, evidence, context, and any personal interest in the matter.
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Procedure for responding to a whistle-blowing concern

Investigating the concern

The Headteacher (the 'recipient') will nominate a member of SLT to investigate where appropriate.

The Headteacher decides if there is a case to answer and may invoke disciplinary procedures.

The investigating officer will meet with the whistleblower, who has the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative.

Within 10 school days of receiving the concern, the Headteacher will:

- Acknowledge receipt
- Outline how the matter will be handled
- Provide an estimated timescale for a final response.

If the concern is not whistleblowing in nature, it will be handled under the relevant policy.

The whistleblower is protected from unfair treatment or dismissal if raising concerns in good faith. Malicious or vexatious concerns may lead to disciplinary action.

If warranted, further investigation will be arranged, possibly involving the Chair of Trustees, external bodies, or the police. The whistleblower will be kept informed of progress and timescales.

Outcome of the investigation

- A report will be prepared detailing findings, recommendations, and any need for external referrals.
 - The whistleblower will be informed of the outcome, respecting confidentiality constraints.
 - Relevant policies will be reviewed to prevent recurrence.
 - While outcomes cannot always be guaranteed, concerns will be dealt with fairly and appropriately.
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Malicious or vexatious allegations

Staff are encouraged to raise concerns when they believe there to potentially be an issue. If an allegation is made in good faith, but the investigation finds no wrongdoing, there will be no disciplinary action against the member of staff who raised the concern.

If, however, an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the person making the allegation.

Escalating concerns beyond the school

The school encourages staff to raise their concerns internally, in line with section 4 of this policy, but recognises that staff may feel the need to report concerns to an external body. A list of prescribed bodies to whom staff can raise concerns with is included [here](#).

Right to Appeal

If the employee does not feel that the correct procedures have been followed, they have the right to appeal to the Board of Trustees.

Responsible Officer

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy.

The Headteacher will maintain a record of concerns raised and the outcome (but in a form which does not endanger employee confidentiality) and will report as necessary to the Board of Trustees.

If the issue relates to the Headteacher, the staff member should refer all matters initially to a member of the SLT and ultimately to the Chair of Trustees.

This policy supports our commitment to a safe, transparent, and accountable school environment, aligned with our vision and values of compassion, respect, and responsibility.