Whistleblowing Policy

Walkley Primary School

Responsibility: Headteacher/Safeguarding Lead

Date of review: September 2025

Next review date: September 2027

Authorised: Governing Board

Introduction

Walkley Primary School seeks to run all aspects of school business and activity with full regard for high standards of conduct and integrity. In the event that members of school staff, parents, governors, or the school community at large become aware of activities which give cause for concern, Walkley Primary school follows the practise set out by Sheffield Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance 2022 and sits with their one-page guidance on the whistleblowing on the school website.

Walkley Primary school has established the following whistleblowing policy, or code of practice, which acts as a framework to allow concerns to be raised confidentially and provides for a thorough and appropriate investigation of the matter to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion.

Walkley Primary school is committed to tackling fraud and other forms of malpractice and treats these issues seriously. Walkley Primary school recognises that some concerns may be extremely sensitive and has therefore developed a system which allows for the confidential raising of concerns within the school environment but also has recourse to an external party outside the management structure of the school.

Walkley Primary School is committed to creating a climate of trust and openness so that a person who has a genuine concern of suspicion can raise the matter with full confidence that the matter will be appropriately considered and resolved.

Throughout this policy, the term whistleblower denotes the person raising the concern or making the complaint. It is not meant in a pejorative sense and is entirely consistent with the terminology used by Lord Nolan as recommended in the Second Report of the Committee of Standards in Public Life: Local Spending Bodies published in May 1996.

When might the whistleblowing policy apply?

The type of activity or behaviour which Walkley Primary School considers should be dealt with under this policy includes (but is not exhaustive):

- Manipulation of accounting records and finances;
- Inappropriate use of school assets or funds;
- Decision-making for personal gain;
- Any criminal activity;

- Abuse of position;
- Fraud and deceit;
- Danger to health and safety or the environment
- Serious breaches of school procedures and school policies which may advantage a particular party (for example tampering with tender documentation, failure to register a personal interest);
- The deliberate concealment of information relating to any of the above matters
- Other unethical conduct

Whistleblowing Related to Safeguarding Children

If a member of staff believes a colleague has:

- Behaved in a way that has 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 are unsuitable to work with children;

Please speak to your Headteacher immediately – Mr Chris Wallis -Please request contact by mailing enquiries@walkley.sheffield.sch.uk, or the School Number 0114 234 0550 or via the office.

The Headteacher will report to the LADO on the same working day.

If a member of staff is worried about the conduct of the Headteacher, or they believe that a reported allegation or concern is not being dealt with properly they should report the matter, on the same working day, (LADO), LADO@sheffield.gov.uk.

They should also report to the Chair of Governors – Duncan Vaughan - dvaughan@walkley.sheffield.sch.uk

In addition, information and advice can be obtained from the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership via the school website.

What action should the whistleblower take?

Walkley encourages the whistleblower to raise the matter internally in the first instance to allow those school staff and governors in positions of responsibility and authority the opportunity to right the wrong and give an explanation for the behaviour or activity.

Walkley has designated a number of individuals to specifically deal with such matters and the whistleblower is invited to decide which of those individuals would be the most appropriate person to deal with the matter.

Name and Position and Contact Details

Headteacher: Mr Chris Wallis- Please request contact by mailing enquiries@walkley.sheffield.sch.uk, or the School Number 0114 234 0550 or via the office.

Chair of Governors: Duncan Vaughan - dvaughan@walkley.sheffield.sch.uk

Safeguarding Governor: Nicola Wiltshire - nwiltshire@walkley.sheffield.sch.uk

Vice Chair of Governors: Nicola Wiltshire - nwiltshire@walkley.sheffield.sch.uk

Deputy Headteacher and Safeguarding Deputy Mrs Jenna Leverton (Deputy Head) - please request contact via enquiries@walkley.sch.uk or 0114 234 0550 or via the office.

Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Antoinette (Toni) Homer- please request contact via enquiries@walkley.sch.uk or 0114 234 0550 or via the office.

The whistleblower may prefer to raise the matter in person, by telephone or in written form marked private and confidential and addressed to one of the ababove-namedndividuals. All matters will be treated in strict confidence and anonymity will be respected wherever possible.

Alternatively, if the whistleblower considers the matter too serious or sensitive to raise within the internal environment of the school, the matter should be directed in the first instance to LADO on the contact details above.

How will the matter be progressed

The individual(s) in receipt of the information or allegation [the investigating officer(s)] will carry out a preliminary investigation. This will seek to establish the facts of the matter and assess whether the concern has foundation and can be resolved internally. The initial assessment may identify the need to involve third parties to provide further information, advice or assistance, for example involvement of other members of school staff, legal or personnel advisors, the police, the Department for Education and Employment, the Council Records will be kept of work undertaken and actions taken throughout the investigation. The investigating officer(s), possibly in conjunction with the governing body, will consider how best to report the findings and what

corrective action needs to be taken. This may include some form of disciplinary action or third party referral such as the police.

The whistleblower will be informed of the results of the investigation and the action taken to address the matter. Depending on the nature of the concern or allegation and whether or not it has been substantiated, the matter will be reported to the governing body and the Council.

If the whistleblower is dissatisfied with the conduct of the investigation or resolution of the matter or has genuine concerns that the matter has not been handled appropriately, the concerns should be raised with the investigating officer(s), the governing body and/or directed to the Council.

Respecting confidentiality

Wherever, (in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Action 1998) possible Walkley seeks to respect the confidentiality and anonymity of the whistleblower and will as far as possible protect him/her from reprisals. Walkley will not tolerate any attempt to victimise the whistleblower or attempts to prevent concerns being raised and will consider any necessary disciplinary or corrective action appropriate to the circumstances.