



## **Whistle-blowing Policy**

Policy Leader: David Martin

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### **Policy Statement**

Ghyll Royd School and the Pre-School (Early Years Foundation Stage) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Safeguarding at Ghyll Royd School and in the Pre-School is everyone's responsibility and that everybody is able to make a referral to children's social care if needed.

### **Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to:

- All employees
- Governors
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Parents and carers (in some instances, if they become aware of serious wrongdoing)

This policy covers concerns that fall outside of everyday grievance procedures and relate to matters in the public interest, such as:

- Criminal activity
- Child protection and safeguarding failures
- Breach of legal obligations
- Miscarriages of justice
- Health and safety risks
- Financial fraud or mismanagement
- Deliberate concealment of any of the above

### **Safeguarding Concerns**

Any concern relating to the welfare or safety of a child should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL. Where a member of staff feels that the DSL has not taken appropriate action, or is involved in

the concern, they must report it directly to the Headteacher, Chair of Governors, or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

## **Raising a Concern**

Concerns should ideally be raised as early as possible. They may be raised verbally or in writing.

You should include:

- The background and nature of the concern
- Why it is being raised
- Any evidence, where available

Concerns can be raised in the following ways:

- **To the Headteacher**
- **To the Chair of Governors** (if the concern is about the Headteacher)
- **To the DSL** (if it relates to safeguarding)

If the concern involves senior leaders or the Governing Body, or you feel unable to raise the matter internally, you may contact:

- The **Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)**
- The **Department for Education (DfE)**
- The **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Contact details will be included in the staff handbook and on the school's safeguarding noticeboard.

## **Confidentiality and Protection**

Concerns will be treated seriously and sensitively. Every effort will be made to keep the whistleblower's identity confidential, although it may not always be possible (e.g. if a police investigation follows).

No individual will be penalised for raising a concern in good faith. Victimisation, harassment, or retaliation against a whistleblower will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

## **False Allegations**

If an individual knowingly makes a false or malicious allegation, disciplinary action may be taken. However, individuals will not be punished for raising a concern they genuinely believe to be true, even if it is not upheld after investigation.

## **Procedure Following a Disclosure**

Once a concern is raised:

1. It will be acknowledged within five working days.
2. An initial assessment will determine whether it falls within the scope of this policy.
3. An appropriate investigation will be conducted. This may involve internal or external parties.
4. The whistleblower will be informed of the outcome, subject to legal and confidentiality limitations.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for this policy and will review it annually. A record of concerns raised under this policy will be maintained by the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors) and reported, in anonymised form, to the Governors where appropriate.