King's Stanley C of E Primary School

WHERE WE CARE ABOUT LEARNING AND EACH OTHER

King's Stanley C of E Primary School's Whistle blowing Policy
Date reviewed: May 2026
Next review May 2028

1. Introduction

King's Stanley Primary School is committed to the highest standards of integrity, accountability and safeguarding. This policy enables staff and others to raise concerns about wrongdoing or malpractice **in the public interest**, without fear of victimisation, harassment or detriment.

This policy complies with:

- The **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA)**
- The **Employment Rights Act 1996**
- **DfE whistleblowing arrangements for maintained schools**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025**

The Governing Body has responsibility for establishing, maintaining and monitoring the effectiveness of this whistleblowing procedure.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees (including temporary and supply staff)
- Contractors and agency workers
- Volunteers and trainees
- Governors

A whistleblowing concern is a disclosure of information which, in the reasonable belief of the worker, tends to show one or more of the following:

- Criminal offences
- Miscarriages of justice
- Health and safety risks
- Environmental damage
- Breaches of legal obligations
- Financial malpractice, fraud or corruption
- Breaches of UK sanctions regimes
- Deliberate concealment of any of the above

Whistleblowing is distinct from personal employment grievances (e.g. pay, workload or interpersonal disputes), which should normally be raised through the school's grievance procedure unless they are in the public interest.

3. Legal Protections

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998:

- Workers who make a **qualifying disclosure** are protected from dismissal, victimisation or other detriment.
- A disclosure must be made **in the public interest**. There is no requirement for "good faith".
- A "worker" includes employees, agency staff and contractors.
- Settlement agreements **cannot lawfully prevent** a worker from making a protected disclosure (Employment Rights Act 1996, s.43J).

The school will take all reasonable steps to protect whistleblowers.

4. Principles

King's Stanley Primary School will ensure that:

- All concerns are taken seriously and investigated promptly.
- Confidentiality is respected as far as possible.
- Whistleblowers are not subjected to harassment, victimisation or disadvantage.
- Any attempt to suppress or cover up wrongdoing is treated as misconduct.
- Malicious or knowingly false allegations may result in disciplinary action.

5. Reporting Procedure

Stage 1 – Internal Reporting

Concerns should normally be raised with the **Headteacher**.

Stage 2 – Alternative Internal Route

If the concern involves the Headteacher, or you feel unable to raise it with them, contact the **Chair of Governors**.

Stage 3 – External Reporting

If internal routes are inappropriate or have been exhausted, disclosures may be made to a **prescribed body** (see Section 7).

Process and Timescales

- All disclosures will be **acknowledged within 7 calendar days** where contact details are provided.
- Initial assessment will determine the appropriate investigation route.
- Updates will be provided where possible, subject to confidentiality and legal constraints.
- Anonymous disclosures will be considered, though they may limit investigation.

6. Safeguarding (KCSIE 2025)

Safeguarding concerns **must not be delayed** by whistleblowing processes.

All staff have a duty to report concerns about pupils' safety and welfare immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or Deputy DSL.

This includes concerns about:

- Physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect
- Inappropriate conduct by adults towards pupils
- Child-on-child abuse
- Online harms, including harmful content, misinformation and disinformation
- Safeguarding risks in alternative provision
- Risks relating to children in kinship care or other vulnerable arrangements

Failure to report safeguarding concerns is a disciplinary matter.

7. External Reporting Options

Staff may seek independent advice or make disclosures to authorised bodies, including:

- **NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line**
  📞 0800 028 0285
- **Department for Education – Whistleblowing**
  Online (including anonymous):
  https://www.gov.uk/guidance/blowing-the-whistle-to-the-department-for-education
- **Prescribed bodies**, where relevant, including:
  - Health & Safety Executive
  - HM Revenue & Customs
  - Environment Agency
  - Education and Skills Funding Agency

The role of external bodies is to assess concerns, not to act as an appeals process.

8. Training and Awareness

- All staff will receive **annual training** on safeguarding and whistleblowing.

- This policy will be shared with all staff, volunteers and governors.
- Regular updates will reinforce the school's **speak-up culture**, including through INSET.
- Training will reflect emerging risks, including **online safety and AI-related concerns**, in line with DfE guidance.

9. Monitoring and Review

- The Governing Body will monitor whistleblowing arrangements.
- Records of concerns will be kept securely and confidentially.

All records will be handled in accordance with data protection legislation and retained only as long as necessary. Access will be restricted to those with a legitimate need to know.