

Definition:

Whistleblowing is raising a concern about malpractice within an organisation.

Protection:

This group is an organisation committed to delivering a high quality service, promoting organisational accountability and maintaining public confidence.

This policy provides individuals in the workplace with protection from victimisation or punishment where they raise a genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice in the organisation. The policy is underpinned by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which encourages people to raise concerns about misconduct or malpractice in the workplace, in order to promote good governance and accountability in the public interest. The Act covers behaviour, which amounts to:

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with any legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- Danger to health and safety of an individual and/or environment
- Deliberate concealment of information about any of the above.

It is not intended that this policy be a substitute for, or an alternative to the group's formal Grievance Procedure, but is designed to nurture a culture of openness and transparency within the organisation, which makes it safe and acceptable for employees and volunteers to raise, in good faith, a concern they may have about misconduct or malpractice.

An employee or volunteer who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise such a concern should normally report the matter to the manager who will advise the employee or volunteer of the action that will be taken in response to the concerns expressed. Concerns should be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible.

If an employee or volunteer feels the matter cannot be discussed with the manager, he or she should contact our Childcare Officer or OFSTED on 0300 123 3155 (designated whistle blowing line) for advice on what steps to follow.

A disclosure in good faith to the manager will be protected. Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible and the employee or volunteer will not suffer any personal detriment as a result of raising any genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice within the organisation.

The LADO should be informed of ALL allegations made against an employee or volunteer in any service / place of work which indicate that the person subject to the allegation is unsuitable to continue to work with children in his or her present position, or in any capacity because they are believed to have:

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- behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he / she is unsuitable to work with children

All new referrals should be made to LADO, for initial evaluation and advice via the LADO email address or telephone. The LADO will request all allegations are recorded in a specific referral form held by the LADO. If the criteria above is met the LADO will arranged a JEM (Joint Evaluation Meeting) previously known as a complex strategy meeting.

This meeting will give consideration to the following courses of action:

- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence
- Enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child/ren is in need of protection or in need of services
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.
- No further action

email LADO@bedford.gov.uk.

Any reported incident into SSG will be reported back into the relevant local authority departments. This will be specifically directed into the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). With support given by SSG for any individual to contact this agency directly or with support from senior management.

http://www.bedford.gov.uk/health_and_social_care/children_young_people/safeguarding_children_board/professionals/caf.aspx