



WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

2026-2027

OWNERSHIP:	Everything Education School
AUTHORISED BY:	M Hussain (Headteacher)
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Everything Education School

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1.0 PURPOSE AND COMMITMENT

Everything Education School is committed to an open, accountable and safeguarding-focused culture in which workers can raise genuine concerns about wrongdoing without fear of retaliation. Whistleblowing is an important part of protecting pupils, staff, public funds and the integrity of the school.

The school expects concerns to be raised promptly, responsibly and through the routes set out in this policy. Safeguarding concerns must always be dealt with in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.

The school recognises that power imbalances or concerns about seniority can make speaking up difficult. No member of staff is expected to report a concern to a person who is themselves implicated in the concern.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to employees, agency and temporary staff, contractors, trainees and volunteers working for or on behalf of Everything Education School. It should be read alongside the Staff Code of Conduct, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, allegations/low-level concerns procedures, Grievance Policy and Disciplinary Policy.

A whistleblowing concern is generally a disclosure of information which the worker reasonably believes shows wrongdoing and is made in the public interest. Examples include:

- a criminal offence, fraud, corruption or bribery;
- a failure to comply with a legal or regulatory obligation;
- a miscarriage of justice;
- danger to the health or safety of any person;
- damage, or risk of damage, to the environment;
- misuse or unauthorised use of public or school funds;
- serious safeguarding failures, unsafe practice or the mishandling of child-protection concerns;
- serious unethical conduct or abuse of authority; or
- deliberate concealment or cover-up of any of the above.

What is not normally whistleblowing

A personal complaint about an individual worker's own employment, treatment or working relationship will normally be dealt with under the school's Grievance Policy, unless the concern also raises a wider public-interest issue. Safeguarding allegations or low-level concerns about an adult working with children must follow the school's safeguarding procedures, even where they are also raised as whistleblowing concerns.

3.0 LEGAL AND SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK

This policy reflects the Employment Rights Act 1996, as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which provides protection in qualifying circumstances for workers who make protected disclosures. It also reflects KCSIE 2026 and current Department for Business and Trade guidance on whistleblowing.

KCSIE 2026 requires staff to act immediately on safeguarding concerns, to know how to raise concerns about other staff and to understand that staff can use the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line where they feel unable to raise safeguarding concerns internally.

4.0 PRINCIPLES

Everything Education School will:

- promote a culture in which speaking up is treated as a responsible and valued professional action;
- provide clear internal and external reporting routes, including routes that bypass the DSL, Headteacher or other senior leaders where necessary;
- take concerns seriously, assess risk promptly and respond proportionately;
- protect confidentiality as far as reasonably possible and explain where information must be shared;

- not subject a worker to detriment for raising a genuine concern in good faith or making a protected disclosure;
- distinguish whistleblowing from grievances, complaints and safeguarding allegations while ensuring the correct procedure is applied;
- maintain accurate records of concerns, decisions, actions, rationales and outcomes;
- ensure leaders understand their particular responsibility to create an open culture and avoid discouraging or suppressing concerns; and
- review practice and learning from concerns to strengthen safeguarding, governance and organisational systems.

5.0 SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS AND CONCERNS ABOUT ADULTS

Any concern that a child may be at risk of harm must be acted on immediately. Staff should normally report concerns about a child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy without delay.

Where the concern is about a member of staff, supply staff member, contractor, volunteer or other adult working with children, staff must follow the school's procedure for safeguarding concerns and allegations about adults. Concerns that may meet the harm threshold and low-level concerns must be handled in line with KCSIE 2026 and local safeguarding arrangements.

If the concern is about the DSL, the Headteacher, a proprietor or another senior leader, the concern must be raised with an appropriate person who is not implicated. Where internal reporting is not possible or is considered unsafe, staff should use the external routes in section 9.

6.0 HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN INTERNALLY

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. A worker does not need to prove the allegation, but should provide enough information to show reasonable grounds for the concern.

The normal internal route is:

the Headteacher or Managing Director, where they are not implicated;

the Chair of the Proprietor Body or another non-implicated proprietor where the concern involves the Headteacher, Managing Director, DSL or senior leadership; or

another appropriate senior person identified by the school where the usual route would create a conflict of interest.

A written disclosure should include, where possible:

- the background and history of the concern, including relevant dates;
- what happened or is believed to be happening;
- who may be involved;
- why the matter causes concern;
- any immediate risk to a child or other person;
- any supporting information or evidence available; and
- whether confidentiality is requested.

If a concern is raised verbally, the receiving person should make an accurate written record and confirm the key points with the person raising the concern where practicable.

7.0 CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMOUS CONCERNS

The school will make every reasonable effort to protect the identity of a person who raises a concern and will only disclose it where necessary to investigate, safeguard a child, comply with the law or enable a fair process. Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Anonymous concerns will be considered. However, anonymity can make it harder to assess, investigate and provide feedback. Staff are encouraged to identify themselves where they feel able to do so.

A worker who wishes their identity to be protected should say so at the earliest opportunity.

8.0 HOW THE SCHOOL WILL RESPOND

The person receiving the concern will first consider whether urgent safeguarding or safety action is required. Urgent protective action will not be delayed while the school determines how the wider matter should be investigated.

Depending on the nature of the concern, the matter may be:

- handled under safeguarding or allegations procedures;
- investigated by an appropriate senior leader or proprietor;
- considered under disciplinary, grievance or complaints procedures;
- referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or children's social care where applicable;
- referred to the police, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Ofsted, Department for Education or another regulator/prescribed person;
- referred for independent investigation or professional advice; or
- resolved through agreed corrective action where a formal investigation is unnecessary.

The school will acknowledge the concern as soon as reasonably practicable. Where appropriate, the person raising the concern will be told who is handling it, whether further information is required and, where possible, the general outcome. The school may be unable to provide full details where this would breach confidentiality, data protection, safeguarding or the rights of others.

All concerns, actions, decisions, rationales and outcomes will be recorded securely in line with the school's record-keeping arrangements.

9.0 EXTERNAL REPORTING ROUTES

A worker may raise a concern externally where they reasonably believe this is appropriate, including where they feel unable to use internal routes or believe the concern has not been addressed. Workers should take care to use the correct prescribed person or body for the subject of the concern.

Workers considering an external disclosure may wish to seek independent advice from a trade union, Acas, Protect or a legal adviser. Disclosure to the media or other wider publication may not attract the same legal protection and workers should obtain advice before taking that step.

10.0 PROTECTION FROM DETRIMENT

Everything Education School will not tolerate victimisation, retaliation, harassment, disadvantage or threats against a worker because they have raised a genuine concern or made a protected disclosure. Any such conduct may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

A person who raises a concern that is not substantiated will not face action merely because the concern proves to be mistaken, provided it was raised responsibly. Deliberately false or malicious allegations may be considered under the school's disciplinary procedures, but the school will not label a concern malicious simply because it is unproven.

11.0 SUPPORT

A person raising a concern may be accompanied at a meeting by a trade union representative or workplace colleague where appropriate. The school will signpost staff to available wellbeing or professional support. Where the matter involves safeguarding, the needs and safety of the child remain paramount.

12.0 TRAINING, INDUCTION AND CULTURE

Whistleblowing and speaking-up arrangements will form part of staff induction and safeguarding training. Staff will be reminded of internal and external routes and of their duty to act immediately on safeguarding concerns. Leaders will model professional challenge, openness, respectful scrutiny and a culture in which staff can question unsafe practice without fear.

The school will ensure that all staff, including those who do not work directly with children, read KCSIE 2026 Part One in full as required by the current statutory guidance.

13.0 RECORD KEEPING, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Whistleblowing records will be stored securely with access limited to those who need it. Records will be retained and processed in line with the school's data protection and records management arrangements.

The Headteacher and Proprietor Body will periodically review themes arising from concerns, while protecting confidentiality, to identify safeguarding, governance, training or organisational improvements.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there are relevant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding procedures or school governance arrangements.

14.0 KEY REFERENCES

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Department for Education (in force from 1 September 2026).
- Employment Rights Act 1996, including whistleblowing protections as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- Department for Business and Trade: Whistleblowing guidance for employers (2026).
- GOV.UK: Whistleblowing for employees.
- GOV.UK: Whistleblowing – list of prescribed people and bodies (updated June 2026).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current statutory guidance).

15.0 APPROVAL AND REVIEW RECORD

Approved by: Proprietor Body

Approval date: September 2026

Next review: September 2027

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