



BCS Policy:

# Whistle Blowing

Date: September 2017

## Objectives

To enable individuals to formally highlight issues of concern or malpractices in the work place without fear of victimisation or retribution and appropriate action taken.

## Key Principles

The Branch Christian School recognises that effective and honest communication is essential if malpractice is to be effectively dealt with and the organisation's success ensured.

The Branch Christian School recognises that raising issues of genuine concern about practice deemed unsuitable may be a difficult choice for people to make. However, as a childcare provider we expect employees, volunteers and Dewsbury Gospel Church trustees to be responsible for highlighting their concerns so that problems can be resolved and removed, quickly and effectively. In accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, this policy provides people with an appropriate forum for raising such issues.

It is important to the school that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by employees or people engaged in the organisation's business, is reported and properly dealt with. Because The Branch Christian School takes such matters very seriously, this policy provides an opportunity for our staff, volunteers and Dewsbury Gospel Church trustees to formally highlight issues of concern or malpractices in the workplace without fear of victimisation or retribution and appropriate action taken. Genuine concerns raised under this policy will provide people with protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act.

Whistle blowing is separate from the grievance procedure. If you have a complaint about your own personal circumstances, you should use the normal grievance procedure. If you have a concern about malpractice within the organisation then you should use the procedure outlined in this document.

## **Examples of Issues to be raised**

Any person that has a reasonable suspicion and/or evidence that inappropriate activities or malpractice exists in the setting, either relating to people or childcare processes, should raise this issue internally, as a matter of urgency, so that it can be dealt with quickly and effectively.

### **Issues:**

- Contravention of Company Policies or Codes of Practice.
- Criminal offences.
- Failure to comply with legal obligations.
- Injustices.
- Health and Safety.
- Damage to the environment.
- Actions to deliberately conceal evidence of any of the above categories.

A formal issue may be raised either when the matter has occurred, is occurring or is felt likely to occur.

Details will be taken about the concern raised, people involved, and any actions already undertaken and views on the potential solution to the problem. A full investigation will be undertaken either by the person receiving the complaint or a more appropriate nominated person. If you raise an issue, you will be encouraged to participate fully in any investigation. Every effort will be made to provide specific and timely feedback, in writing, about the progress of the investigation, however, this may not always be possible, as to do so may break our responsibility of confidence to another party involved in the investigation.

### **Confidentiality**

Whilst it will be very difficult to deal with any complaints raised on an anonymous basis, The Branch Christian School recognises that people may want to raise a concern in confidence, under this policy. Any person may ask The Branch Christian School to protect their identity by keeping their confidence and The Branch Christian School will commit to do so, although The Branch Christian School may ask you for a good reason for concealing your identity. The Branch Christian School will endeavour to maintain this confidentiality even where formal requests for full information are received, in the course of legal proceedings.

### **Your Protection**

If you raise a genuine concern under this policy, The Branch Christian School will ensure that you will not be at risk of losing your job or suffering any form of disadvantage in the working environment as a result. This assurance is not extended to someone who maliciously raises a matter that they know to be untrue. In the event of this happening the individual could be liable to disciplinary action.

## Staff Responsibility

Individuals employed by The Branch Christian School (Dewsbury Gospel Church), volunteers and trustees who wish to highlight concerns about The Branch Christian School may use this policy.

The Principal has overall and final responsibility for all matters relating to whistle blowing. The day to day responsibility for whistle blowing for The Branch Christian School is delegated to The Branch Christian School's Administrator who will ensure that:

- Adequate resources are made available to implement this policy.
- Adequate arrangements are made to bring this policy to the notice of all interested parties.
- The effectiveness of the policy and its arrangements are reviewed annually during the relevant meetings or more frequently if deemed necessary.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Self-assessment process and Ofsted inspections.

## Supporting Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with all The Branch Christian School's policies and procedures.

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### Policy Review Information:

Review date	Changes made	By whom	Date of next review
September 2017	No changes required.	Mrs. D Thomas	September 2020