



UNICORN SCHOOL

WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

This policy applies to all staff (including students and volunteers) at Unicorn School

This Policy links to the Unicorn Code of Conduct, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Low Level Concerns about Staff policy

RESPONSIBILITY

Staff Member:

Head

Last Reviewed:

September 2025

Next Review:

September 2026

Approved by Governors:

November 2025

WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff (including students and volunteers) can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion.

Children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues, about poor or unsafe practice, and about potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

The school has a culture of valuing staff and of reflective practice, and there should be transparency and accountability in relation to how concerns are received and handled.

Unicorn School recognises the protections afforded to workers under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and the Employment Rights Act 1996.

Staff who make a disclosure in the public interest are protected from dismissal or detriment when raising concerns relating to:

- Safeguarding
- Criminal activity
- Failure to comply with legal obligations
- Miscarriages of justice
- Health and safety risks
- Damage to the environment
- Deliberate concealment of wrongdoing

The school will:

- Treat disclosures sensitively
- Respect confidentiality where possible
- Consider anonymous disclosures

Records of disclosures will be:

- Maintained securely
- Held by the Head or nominated safeguarding lead
- Managed in line with data protection requirements

Procedure to follow:

Where a concern relates to the safety or welfare of a child:

- The safeguarding procedures take priority.
- Concerns must be reported to the DSL without delay.

- Where there is immediate risk of harm, staff should contact emergency services or Children's Services.

Allegations about staff will be managed in line with safeguarding procedures, including referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate.

Any concerns over malpractice should be raised with the Headteacher

polly.fraley@unicornschoo.org.uk

If the allegation is about the Head then staff should approach the Chairs of Governors

Paul.Rathbone@unicornschoo.org.uk

Charlotte.Lee@unicornschoo.org.uk

Following a disclosure:

1. The concern will be acknowledged
2. Initial risk will be assessed
3. An appropriate lead will investigate
4. Feedback will be provided to the whistleblower, where possible, within 10 days of the disclosure.

Safeguarding-related disclosures may be escalated to external agencies without internal investigation where necessary.

If the whistle blower is not satisfied with the response given they should put their concerns in writing and ask for further consideration being given.

Staff (including students or volunteers) may raise concerns externally if internal routes are inappropriate or ineffective. These include:

- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line 0800 028 0285 or email help@nspcc.org.
- Department for Education
- Local Authority Children's Services
- Police
- Local Authority Designated Person (LADO)

Staff may also raise safeguarding concerns directly with ISI where appropriate.

Monitoring and Oversight

Governors will receive:

- Anonymised summaries of disclosures
- Assurance of appropriate action taken

Sensitive information will be shared only on a need-to-know basis.