

Littleover Community School



and Sixth Form Centre

Whistleblowing Policy

April 2026

School Leader	Sara Warren
Link Governor	M. Basharet

Policy approved on (date):	25/03/2026		
By:	Governing Board	Signed:	

Last reviewed on :	9/02/2026		
By:	Sara Warren	Signed:	Sara Warren

Date of next review :	01/04/2029
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Whistleblowing Policy

This policy is reviewed every three years by the Full Governors Committee.

1. Introduction

Littleover Community School and Sixth Form knows that it faces the risk that something may go wrong or that someone may ignore our policies, our procedures or the law resulting in some very serious consequences; these could include safeguarding concerns, staff conduct, financial issues, etc. Experience shows that staff, or others who work on behalf of an organisation, often have worries or suspicions and could, by reporting their concerns at an early stage, help put things right or identify and stop potential wrongdoing.

A Whistleblower is generally a term used for a person who works in or for an organisation and raises an honest and reasonable concern about a possible safeguarding concern, fraud, crime, danger or other serious risk that could threaten colleagues, service users, customers, members of the public or the success and reputation of the organisation.

We welcome all genuine concerns and will treat your issues seriously - this policy explains how to raise a concern, the types of activity you should report, the protection we can provide, confidentiality, our response and how you can take matters further, if necessary.

This Policy makes it clear that you can express your concerns without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. This Policy is intended to give staff the opportunity to raise serious concerns within the School instead of feeling they have to overlook a problem or “blow the whistle” outside. It is also designed to protect employees from malicious allegations.

2. Purpose and aim of the Policy

This Policy aims to:

- Encourage you to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice.
- Provide an avenue for you to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken.
- Make sure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue them if you are not satisfied.
- Reassure you that you will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if you have a reasonable belief that you have made any disclosure in the public interest

3. Scope

The Policy applies to all employees, partnering organisations and those contractors working for the School, for example, agency staff and builders. It also covers suppliers and those providing services under a contract with the School.

There are existing procedures in place to enable you to lodge a grievance relating to your own employment. The Whistleblowing Policy is intended to cover major concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures. These include:

- Safeguarding concerns.
- Conduct which is a criminal offence or a breach of law.
- A breach of our Code of Conduct for staff.
- Disclosures related to miscarriages of justice.
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees.
- Damage to the environment. (e.g. land, buildings, highways, water, air, waste, energy, transport, natural habitat etc.)
- The unauthorised use of public funds.
- Possible fraud and corruption.
- Sexual or physical or verbal abuse of clients, colleagues, volunteers or employees.
- Unethical or improper conduct.
- Failure to follow the School's policies and procedures.
- Services that fall seriously below approved standards or practice.

Therefore, you can report any serious concerns that you have about any aspect of service provision or the conduct of staff or others acting on behalf of the School under the Whistleblowing Policy. This may be about something that:

- Makes you feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards you experience or the standards you believe the School subscribes to.
- Is against the School's policies.
- Falls below established standards of practice.
- Amounts to improper conduct.

4. Related School Policies and Procedures

This Policy links with the School's Safeguarding policies, Fraud Policy, and makes it clear that concerns can be raised without fear of reprisals.

These procedures are in addition to the School's Complaints Procedures and other statutory reporting procedures. Our Whistleblowing arrangements **do not** replace the following:

- Employee Code of Conduct
- Complaints Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Attendance Management Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Managing Allegations Policy

5. Legislation, guidance and standards

The Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) 1998 protects workers who speak out in the public interest about fraudulent, criminal or dangerous activities, wrong doings or malpractice at work. Additionally, the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 has updated some elements of the Employee Rights Act 1996 in respect of protected disclosures. LCS also ensures all staff are trained on the latest Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE) guidance each academic year.

6. Policy statement

Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within an organisation. However, they may not express their concerns because they fear harassment or victimisation. They may also feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the organisation. In these circumstances, it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice. The School is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment, we expect employees, and others that we deal with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the School's work to come forward and voice those concerns. It is recognised that most cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis.

All concerns will be treated in confidence and we will make every effort not to reveal your identity if you so wish. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, as courts, tribunals and other bodies can order the School to disclose documents and other information provided to it. At the appropriate time you may be asked to come forward as a witness.

We will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressure) and we will take action to protect you when you raise a concern believed to be in the public interest. We will take any disciplinary or corrective action should anyone attempt to victimise the whistleblower or prevent concerns being raised.

We do not encourage anonymous reporting as the concerns are more difficult to investigate and are generally less powerful. We would like you to put your name to the allegations whenever possible and remind you of the protection we can provide if we know who you are.

Anonymous whistleblowing referrals will be considered at the discretion of the officers handling your concern, in consultation with the service area, where appropriate. This discretion will be based on the:

- seriousness of the issues raised
- credibility of the concern
- likelihood of confirming the allegation from an attributable source evidence base

It may be that our investigations do not confirm your allegation. We take all concerns seriously and can assure you that no action will be taken against you if you have raised a concern in the genuine belief that it is, or may be, true.

If we find that you have maliciously made a false allegation we will take action and you will not be eligible for protection under PIDA.

7. How to raise a concern

We encourage you initially to raise your concern internally, this allows the School the opportunity to investigate the allegation, right the wrong and/or give an explanation for the behaviour or activity. You should report your concern to the Headteacher, or if the concern is regarding the Headteacher, this should be reported to the Chair of Governors. We advise that you make it clear that you are raising your concerns under the School's whistleblowing arrangements, this will help the Headteacher or Chair of Governors to respond in line with this policy.

Our response will depend on the nature of the concern raised and may be:

- advice only
- resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation
- investigated internally (by management, Derby City Council Monitoring Officer, fraud team and/or other independent investigators)
- referred to the relevant safeguarding team (child protection or vulnerable adults)
- referred to the Police
- referred to the external Derby City Council auditor
- the subject of an independent inquiry

8. Performance and risk management

The number of whistleblowing reports received may be reported to the Audit and Accounts Committee, as they may highlight where there are potential risks to the School which require mitigation.

9. Communicating the policy

The Chair of Governors has delegated responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this Policy to the Headteacher. The Headteacher maintains a record of concerns raised and the outcomes, in a form which does not endanger your confidentiality, and will report as appropriate to the Chair of Governors, School Operations Manager, and where necessary Derby City Council.

10. Information

Evaluation and review

This Policy will be reviewed as required, and every 3 years in any event by the School Operations Manager and Finance Link Governor.

11. Contact Information

You can get advice/guidance on how to pursue matters of concern from:

- Headteacher: Tel. 01332 513219
- Chair of Governors at: chairofgovernors@littleover.derby.sch.uk

12. Contact information for a concern re Safeguarding

If an employee has a concern in relation to malpractice or ill treatment of an adult or child by a member of staff, it must be reported to:

- Headteacher: Tel. 01332 513219
- Designated Safeguarding Lead: email contact.safeguarding@littleover.derby.sch.uk
- If the concern is regarding the Headteacher, report this to the Chair of Governors at: chairofgovernors@littleover.derby.sch.uk)
- The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line is available as an alternative reporting route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school. Staff can telephone 0800 028 0285, the line is open from 08:00 to 20:00 Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is help@nspcc.org.uk

13. How the matter can be taken further

This policy is intended to provide you with an avenue **within** the School to raise concerns. The School hopes you will be satisfied with any action taken. If you are not, and if you feel it is right to take the matter outside the school, the following are possible contact points:

You can get advice/guidance on how to pursue matters of concern from:

- Emily Feenan, Derby City Council Monitoring Officer, telephone number: 01332 643611
Email: emily.feenan@derby.gov.uk
- Your trade union.
- Your local Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Relevant professional bodies or regulatory organisations (including the Ombudsman).
- A relevant voluntary organisation (including the Public Concern At Work Helpline, tel: 020 7404 6609).
- The Police.

This does not prevent you from taking your own legal advice.

14. Contact information for a concern re Modern Slavery

If an employee has a suspicion in relation to a case of modern slavery/human trafficking then under Section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 it must be notified to the Home Office. For support in these situations you must contact the Council's Cohesion and Integration Manager Tel: 643044.