# Bledington Primary School

## WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

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| **Date of Ratification by FGB:**<br>**18.01.24**<br>**29.01.25**<br>**28.01.26**<br>**07.10.26** | ***Updated***<br>***01.01.24***<br>***09.01.25***<br>***14.01.26***<br>***17.08.26*** | **Signed:**<br>**CO-HEADTEACHERS**<br><br>**COCHAIRS OF GOVERNORS**<br><br>*K Dainty A Hammerstein* |

### Safeguarding Statement

At Bledington Primary School we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services, at Bledington Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

This policy should be read alongside our Equality, Code of conduct, Health & Safety, Accessibility, Emotional Health & Well-being policies. All our policies are available at: https://www.bledington.gloucs.sch.uk/policies/

# BPS Whistleblowing Policy

## 1. Purpose

This policy aims to encourage employees, governors, volunteers, contractors, and other members of the school community to raise concerns about wrongdoing, malpractice, illegal acts, or unacceptable behaviour within the school.

The school is committed to the highest standards of openness, honesty, accountability, and safeguarding. Individuals who raise genuine concerns in good faith will be supported and protected from victimisation or detriment.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All school employees
- Governors and trustees
- Volunteers
- Agency workers
- Contractors and consultants

This policy is intended for concerns that are in the public interest rather than personal employment grievances, which should normally be raised under the Grievance Policy.

## 3. What Is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information concerning wrongdoing, including but not limited to:

- Safeguarding concerns regarding children
- Criminal offences
- Fraud or financial irregularities
- Breach of legal obligations
- Misuse of public funds
- Health and safety risks
- Damage to the environment
- Deliberate concealment of any of the above
- Conduct that falls below expected professional standards

## 4. Raising a Concern

Staff should raise concerns as soon as possible.

Concerns may be raised with:

1. The Headteacher
2. The Chair of Governors (if the concern relates to the Headteacher)
3. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (for safeguarding concerns)
4. The Trust CEO or Local Authority (where appropriate)

Concerns can be made verbally or in writing and should include:

- The nature of the concern
- Relevant dates and times
- Names of individuals involved
- Any evidence available

Individuals are not expected to prove an allegation but should provide as much information as possible.

## 5. Safeguarding Concerns

Any concern relating to the safety or welfare of a child must be reported immediately in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Safeguarding concerns must never be delayed due to uncertainty about whether they fall under whistleblowing procedures.

## 6. Confidentiality

The school will make every effort to protect the identity of individuals raising concerns.

However, there may be circumstances where identities must be disclosed, for example:

- As part of a legal process
- To ensure a fair investigation
- Where safeguarding or criminal investigations require disclosure

## 7. Anonymous Concerns

Anonymous concerns will be considered, but investigation may be more difficult if insufficient information is provided.

The school encourages individuals to identify themselves where possible.

## 8. Protection for Whistleblowers

No employee or volunteer will suffer harassment, victimisation, discrimination, or disadvantage for raising a genuine concern in good faith.

Any retaliation against a whistleblower will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

## 9. Investigation Process

Upon receiving a concern, the school will:

1. Acknowledge receipt where possible.
2. Conduct an initial assessment.
3. Determine the most appropriate course of action.
4. Undertake an investigation where necessary.
5. Provide feedback, where appropriate and lawful.

The level of investigation will depend on the nature and seriousness of the concern.

## 10. Malicious or Vexatious Allegations

Concerns raised in good faith will not result in disciplinary action, even if they are unsubstantiated.

However, allegations made knowingly false, maliciously, or for personal gain may lead to disciplinary action.

## 11. Escalating Concerns Externally

If an individual believes their concern has not been handled appropriately, they may raise it with:

- The Local Authority
- The Academy Trust
- The Department for Education
- Ofsted
- The Health and Safety Executive
- The Police
- The NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline (for safeguarding concerns)

## 12. Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body/Trust Board will review this policy annually and monitor its effectiveness to ensure staff feel able to raise concerns safely and confidently.

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**Named Contacts**

**CoHeadteachers :** Amanda Ziebeck & Jill Kewley
**Chair of Governors:** Kieri Dainty & Annie Hammerstein
**Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Amanda Ziebeck, Jill Kewley with DDSLs Mona Logue, Sam Bell & Rebecca Thomas
**Trust/Local Authority Contact:** LADO

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This policy is updated annually.