



The Dragonfly Federation

East Ruston and Stalham
Infant and Pre-schools



A Flying Start for all

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN: WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY **Reporting illegal or improper conduct or concerns about** **safeguarding children or young people** **procedure and guidance for staff**

Stalham Community Infant School and East Ruston Infant School and associated pre-schools to both will ensure that children, young people and adults are able to raise worries and concerns. In order to achieve this we will:

Ensure allegations are managed fairly by following Norfolk LSCB procedures.

Have a named designated senior professional and deputy person who will be the contact point with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the event of an allegation being made.

This guidance is written for staff¹ working with children and young people in education settings including maintained schools.

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children or young person who are targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

Concerns about any of the following should be reported to the school's designated senior professional for Child Protection (DSP):

- physical abuse of a pupil/student
- sexual abuse of a pupil/student
- emotional abuse of a pupil/student

- neglect of a pupil/student
- an intimate or improper relationship between an adult and a pupil/student

The school's DSP isSarah Mules

The reason for the concern may be the actions of a colleague (including a more senior colleague), a governor, another pupil/student or someone outside the school. Whatever the reason, concerns must be reported.

Don't think what if I'm wrong - think what if I'm right

Reasons for whistle blowing

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

What stops people from whistle blowing

- Fear of starting a chain of events which spirals out of control
- Disrupting the work or project
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

How to raise a concern

- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why
- Approach your immediate manager, designated child protection staff member/Headteacher, or the Child Protection governor.
- If your concern is about your immediate manager/Headteacher, speak to the Chair of Governors or you feel you need to take it to someone outside the school, contact the Norfolk Local Safeguarding Children Board @ www.lscb.norfolk.gov.uk or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO can be contacted on 01603 223473 OR 01603 223006.
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response - don't let matters rest
- Ideally you should put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can.

A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but you will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

1 Staff includes any adult, paid or voluntary, who works in a school or educational establishment within the LA

What happens next

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries
- Your employer has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence

Self reporting

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children

Further advice and support

It is recognised that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from your line manager, HR department and/or your professional or trade union