



ABLE Education Policy Document

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

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Purpose of the policy

This policy outlines the process for staff, contractors, students, and other stakeholders to report concerns about unethical, illegal, or improper behaviour at ABLE Education. Whistleblowing is vital for maintaining transparency, integrity, and safeguarding within the provision. This policy aims to ensure that all concerns are handled with respect, confidentiality, fairness, and that no individual will suffer detriment for raising a genuine concern.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All workers, including tutors, support staff, and contractors
- Volunteers and external partners involved in the provision
- Students and their parents or guardians

This policy covers concerns relating to, but not limited to:

- Safeguarding issues
- Discrimination or harassment
- Unsafe working or learning environments
- Breach of legal or regulatory obligations
- Any other unethical or unlawful conduct

What is “whistleblowing”?

Whistleblowing is the act of reporting concerns about malpractice or wrongdoing within the organization. It is distinct from complaints about personal grievances or issues with the terms and conditions of employment. Whistleblowing should be used when the concern involves serious wrongdoing that could impact the well-being of others, the provision’s integrity, or its reputation.

Who can report concerns?

Anyone who becomes aware of any of the above issues is encouraged to report them, including:

- Employees and contractors
- Students (through a trusted adult or Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- Parents, carers, and community members

How to report concerns

Concerns can be raised in the following ways:

- Verbal or written reports to the Head of Provision/Designated Safeguarding Lead at safeguarding@able-education.co.uk
- If the report concerns the Head of Provision/Designated Safeguarding Lead, staff or contractors can make an external whistleblowing report via the NSPCC¹

What should be reported?

Concerns can relate to a range of issues including, but not limited to:

- **Safeguarding and child protection:** concerns about the safety or welfare of students, including abuse or neglect
- **Bullying and harassment:** any form of bullying, discrimination, or harassment that violates policies or laws
- **Financial mismanagement:** misuse of public funds, fraudulent activity, or breach of financial policies
- **Health and safety:** unsafe working or learning environments that could endanger staff, contractors or students
- **Dishonesty or corruption:** fraudulent or unethical conduct by workers, contractors, or other stakeholders
- **Failure to follow procedures:** non-compliance with statutory regulations or organizational policies that could harm others or the organization

How will reports be handled?

- **Confidentiality:** all reports will be treated confidentially, with the whistleblower's identity protected where possible. However, in some cases, it may be necessary to disclose the whistleblower's identity to properly investigate the concern. In such cases, the whistleblower will be notified beforehand.
- **Investigation:** once a concern is raised, it will be assessed and, if necessary, investigated by an appropriate person or team. Investigations will be conducted promptly, fairly, and thoroughly.
- **Feedback:** the whistleblower will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of the investigation, unless this is not possible due to the nature of the investigation (e.g., legal or regulatory restrictions)

¹ [Whistleblowing Advice Line | NSPCC](#)

Protection for whistleblowers

Whistleblowers are protected by the law. They will not face any form of retaliation or detriment for raising a concern in good faith. This includes:

- Protection from dismissal or disciplinary action
- Protection from bullying, harassment, or victimization
- Concealment of their identity, where applicable

Any individual found to be retaliating against a whistleblower will be subject to disciplinary action.

False or malicious allegations

While the provision is committed to protecting those who report genuine concerns, false or malicious allegations can harm others and undermine the credibility of the whistleblowing process. If it is found that a report was made with the intention to cause harm or damage, the whistleblower may face disciplinary action.