

Whistleblowing

Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

Whistleblowing refers to the act of reporting concerns related to wrongdoing, malpractice, or risks that could compromise the safety and wellbeing of young people, staff, or the public. This policy is grounded in the principles of the **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998**, which safeguards individuals from victimisation when disclosing genuine concerns in good faith.

The organisation is committed to fostering a transparent and accountable culture, where staff feel confident and supported in reporting concerns. We aim to ensure that all disclosures are handled responsibly, fairly, and confidentially, contributing to a safe and ethical working environment.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all employees who wish to report instances of misconduct, including but not limited to abuse, neglect, criminal behaviour, or breaches of professional conduct. It outlines the protections available to whistleblowers and reinforces the legal duty of care that requires staff to report known or suspected wrongdoing.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff are expected to remain vigilant in upholding the quality and integrity of care provided. Any behaviours, practices, or situations that may endanger individuals or compromise standards must be reported without delay.

This includes:

- Allegations of abuse or neglect
- Criminal conduct
- Unsafe practices
- Breaches of policy or ethical codes

Concerns should, in the first instance, be reported to a line manager. Where staff feel unable to raise concerns within their immediate team, they may escalate the issue to a senior leader, director, or an appropriate external authority such as:

- Local Authority Safeguarding Units
- The Police
- Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

Procedure for Handling Disclosures

When a concern is raised, the following procedure will apply:

1. Initial Assessment

The line manager or appropriate officer will review the disclosure promptly, following the organisation's Safeguarding and Protection Policy. Confidentiality will be maintained unless a legal obligation requires disclosure for safeguarding purposes.

2. Support for the Whistleblower

Measures will be taken to ensure the whistleblower is protected from retaliation, harassment, or disadvantage arising from their disclosure.

3. Formal Investigation

If warranted, a full investigation will be initiated. Where appropriate, external bodies such as CIW or Local Authority Safeguarding teams will be notified.

4. Remedial Measures

If the investigation identifies failings or risks, the organisation will implement corrective action without delay to mitigate further harm or misconduct.

5. Record Keeping and Monitoring

A designated person will maintain secure records of all whistleblowing cases. Regular reviews will be conducted to identify trends, recurring issues, and areas for organisational improvement.

Protection from Retaliation

The organisation strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against individuals who raise concerns in good faith. Any attempt to intimidate or punish whistleblowers will result in disciplinary action. If a whistleblower experiences threats or mistreatment, they should report this immediately to a manager or senior leader, who will act to safeguard their wellbeing.

False or Malicious Allegations

All disclosures will be taken seriously. However, deliberate misuse of the whistleblowing procedure — including knowingly making false or malicious accusations — is a serious matter and may result in disciplinary action or legal consequences.

Key Contacts and External Support

Staff may seek guidance from the following services:

- Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)
- Acas Helpline
- Local Safeguarding Teams in Powys, Carmarthenshire, Swansea, and Neath Port Talbot
- Local Police: Dyfed-Powys, Swansea, and Neath Port Talbot divisions

Relevant contact details are listed in the Staff Handbook.

Training and Awareness

The organisation is committed to ensuring all employees are regularly trained on whistleblowing procedures, safeguarding, and compliance with the Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017. Ongoing development ensures that staff remain informed, confident, and compliant with legal and professional standards.