



Montessori Home School Hub Ltd

Whistle-Blowing Policy

Approved by:

Ben Pearse and Philippa Goddard

Date: February 2026

Next review due by: February 2027

Contents

1. Aims
2. Legislation
3. Definition of Whistle-Blowing
4. Procedure for Staff to Raise a Whistle-Blowing Concern
5. MSHH Procedure for Responding to a Whistle-Blowing Concern
6. Malicious or Vexatious Allegations
7. Escalating Concerns Beyond the Setting
8. Approval
9. Links with Other Policies

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Encourage individuals to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible, knowing their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality respected.
- Staff know how to raise concerns about potential wrongdoing in or by the setting.
- Set clear procedures for how the setting will respond to such concerns.
- Inform staff of the protection available to them if they raise a whistle-blowing concern.
- Ensure staff receive a response to their concerns and know how to pursue them if unsatisfied.
- Assure staff they will not be victimised for raising legitimate concerns through the steps outlined in the policy, even if mistaken (though vexatious or malicious concerns may be treated as a disciplinary issue).
- This policy forms part of MSHH's safeguarding framework. Concerns relating to the safety or welfare of a child must be reported immediately and will be handled in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Where there are concerns about how safeguarding matters have been managed, this whistle-blowing policy provides an additional route for raising those concerns.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time. It applies to all employees, Directors, volunteers, self-employed tutors, contractors and any individual working on behalf of Montessori Home School Hub Ltd.

MSHH promotes an open and transparent culture in which concerns are welcomed as an important part of maintaining high standards of safeguarding, integrity and professional practice.

2. Legislation

This policy aligns with [government guidance on whistle-blowing](#). It also takes into account the [Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998](#) and the DfE's *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)*.

3. Definition of Whistle-Blowing

Whistle-blowing involves reporting wrongdoing that is “in the public interest.” Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Failure to safeguard children or act appropriately on safeguarding concerns
- Concerns about the conduct of staff, volunteers or directors towards children (this includes low-level concerns about adult behaviour that may not meet the harm threshold but could indicate a pattern of unsafe practice)
- A criminal offence (e.g., fraud or corruption) is committed, likely to be committed, or is being committed.
- Health and safety of any individual is endangered.
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement.
- Breaches of financial management procedures.
- Attempts to cover up any of the above.
- Environmental damage.

A whistle-blower is someone who raises a genuine concern. Whistle-blowers are not mischief-makers or troublemakers. Personal staff grievances, such as bullying or harassment, are typically not considered whistle-blowing concerns.

Public interest means acting beyond personal interest, serving a broader group. Considerations include:

- The number of people affected by the disclosure.
- The extent and nature of the wrongdoing.
- The identity of the alleged wrongdoer.

Further guidance is available from [Protect](#) and their [advice line](#).

4. Our Assurances to Whistle-Blowers

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA), workers are legally protected from detriment or dismissal when they raise concerns in the public interest. The setting:

- Will not tolerate harassment or victimisation of whistle-blowers and will take appropriate action to protect staff who raise concerns in good faith.
- Will handle all disclosures confidentially.
- Encourages individuals to raise concerns confidentially and will discuss with them if their identity needs to be disclosed.
- Anonymous disclosures will be considered and investigated where possible; however, anonymity may limit MSHS's ability to fully investigate the concern or provide feedback.

5. Procedure for Staff to Raise a Whistle-Blowing Concern

5.1 When to Raise a Concern

Concerns should be raised as soon as possible after the individual becomes aware of potential wrongdoing. Early reporting enables MSHS to address issues promptly and reduce the risk of harm.

If you believe a child is at risk of immediate harm, this must be reported without delay in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Where appropriate, this may include contacting

external agencies such as the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Services or the Police.

Concerns relating to safeguarding failures, criminal activity, fraud, serious breaches of legal obligations, or risks to health and safety should be reported immediately.

Other concerns that fall within the definition of whistleblowing (for example breaches of policy, financial irregularities, or attempts to conceal wrongdoing) should be raised as soon as reasonably practicable after they come to light.

Whistleblowing procedures do not replace safeguarding procedures but may be used where there are concerns about how safeguarding matters have been handled within MHSH. This includes situations where an individual believes safeguarding procedures have not been properly followed, where a concern has been ignored or minimised, or where the concern relates to the conduct of the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Director.

Individuals should not attempt to investigate concerns themselves before reporting them.

5.2 Who to Report To

- If the concern raised is about Ben – report to Philippa and vice versa.
- If the concern relates to both Directors, the individual should report directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or seek advice from Protect.

5.3 How to Raise the Concern

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. Where possible, concerns should include relevant names, dates, locations, evidence and any other contextual information. A written record will be made of all concerns raised verbally.

For external advice, contact:

- Protect at 020 3117 2520.
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline: 0800 028 0285.
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): LADOenquiries@brighton-hove.go.uk.

6. Setting Procedure for Responding to a Whistle-Blowing Concern

6.1 Investigating the Concern

When a concern is received, the recipient will:

- Meet with the whistle-blower within a reasonable time to gather details.
- Reiterate their protection under PIDA (The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998).
- Investigate the concern and determine next steps, such as involving an external body, or the police. Where the concern relates to safeguarding, appropriate external agencies (such as the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Services, or the Police where a child is at immediate risk) will be contacted without delay.
- Inform the whistle-blower of the outcome where appropriate.
- The concern will be acknowledged within five working days where possible. MHSH will aim to investigate concerns promptly and proportionately. The whistle-blower will be informed of the outcome of the investigation, subject to legal and confidentiality constraints.

6.2 Outcome of the Investigation

A written record will be kept detailing the concern raised, the investigation undertaken, findings, actions taken, and any referrals made to external agencies. Records relating to whistleblowing concerns will be retained securely in accordance with MSHS's Data Protection Policy.

7. Malicious or Vexatious Allegations

- Allegations made in good faith will not result in disciplinary action, even if mistaken.
- Malicious or deliberately invented allegations may result in disciplinary action.

8. Escalating Concerns Beyond the Setting

Staff may escalate concerns to external bodies if they feel internal reporting is inappropriate or if they believe their concern has not been properly addressed.

Relevant external bodies may include:

- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Children's Services
- The Police (where a child is at immediate risk)
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line
- Protect (independent whistleblowing advice)

Individuals may also refer to the government's list of prescribed bodies for whistleblowing.

9. Links with Other Policies

This policy links with:

- Staff grievance policy
- Complaints procedure
- Child protection and safeguarding policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by Ben and Philippa.