

# Whistleblowing Policy

*September 2023*

***Our Strategic objectives relating to young people with high learning potential, their parents and carers, and their schools:***

- *Empowering Young People*
- *Empowering Parents*
- *Creating a Community*
- *Advocating for Needs and Rights*
- *Strengthening our sustainability and effectiveness*

## Table of Contents

1	Purpose of the Whistle Blowing Policy .....	3
2	Scope of the Whistle Blowing Policy .....	3
3	Definitions .....	3
4	Policy .....	4
4.1	Principles .....	4
4.2	Procedure .....	4
4.3	Protection for Whistle Blowers.....	4
4.4	Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 .....	4
5	Monitoring and Reporting .....	5
6	Training.....	5
7	Roles and Responsibilities. ....	5
8	Related Standards, Policies and Processes .....	6
9	Revision History .....	6
	APPENDIX 1: Whistle Blowing Checklist .....	7
	APPENDIX 2: Further information .....	7

## 1 Purpose of the Whistle Blowing Policy

Potential Plus UK recognises that there may be circumstances where employees, volunteers, casual workers or trustees feel:

- unable to raise concerns about incidents of malpractice within the organisation as there is reasonable doubt that these would be dealt with adequately
- that a concern that has been raised was not dealt with adequately

This policy provides a transparent and confidential process for ensuring all concerns are dealt with appropriately in order to protect the integrity of Potential Plus UK. It aims to create a culture where everyone understands that whistle blowing procedures are a defence against fraud, malpractice and ineffective safeguarding. The policy upholds our values and ensures that anyone raising a concern can do so without fear of unfair treatment or loss of their role.

## 2 Scope of the Whistle Blowing Policy

All employees, casual workers, volunteers and trustees are covered by this policy and are encouraged to raise genuine concerns about possible improprieties in matters of financial reporting and other malpractices at the earliest opportunity, and in an appropriate way. This policy covers possible improprieties including:

- financial
- fraud
- corruption, bribery or blackmail
- criminal offences
- failure to comply with a legal or regulatory obligation
- endangering the health and safety of an individual
- concealment of any of the above.

## 3 Definitions

**Whistleblowing:** “You’re a whistleblower if you’re a worker and you report certain types of wrongdoing. This will usually be something you’ve seen at work - though not always. The wrongdoing you disclose must be in the public interest. This means it must affect others, for example the general public.” (*GOV.UK Whistleblowing for Employees*)

## 4 Policy

### 4.1 Principles

- All concerns raised will be treated fairly
- Harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern will not be tolerated
- Any individual making a disclosure will retain their anonymity unless they agree otherwise
- Any individual raising a concern will be told who is handling the matter
- No one will be at risk of suffering any form of retribution as a result of raising a concern even if they are mistaken. We do not however extend this assurance to someone who maliciously raises a matter they know to be untrue.

### 4.2 Procedure

If anyone covered by the scope of this policy believes reasonably and in good faith that malpractice exists in the workplace, they should report this immediately to their line manager. However, if for any reason they are reluctant to do so, then they should report their concerns to the CEO or Chair of Trustees. For concerns reported in this way, we will give as much feedback as possible without any infringement on our duty of confidence owed to someone else.

If they are concerned about approaching them, they can speak, in confidence, to the **NSPCC Whistle Blowing Helpline** for support and advice (see Appendix 2).

### 4.3 Protection for Whistle Blowers

Employees' identities will not be disclosed without prior consent. Where concerns are unable to be resolved without revealing the identity of the employee raising the concern, (e.g. if their evidence is required in court), we will enter into a dialogue with the employee concerned as to whether and how we can proceed.

### 4.4 Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

All UK employees are protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 when making a protected disclosure (disclosures of information, which in the reasonable belief of the employee making the disclosure, cover the issues identified in the scope of the policy).

## 5 Monitoring and Reporting

To monitor and report compliance with this policy, Potential Plus UK will follow these steps:

- Review this policy every 3 years and refer it to the board of trustees for agreement and adoption
- All employees, volunteers, trustees and casual workers acting on behalf of Potential Plus UK will be given this policy annually and required to sign a declaration to confirm that they have read the policy, sought clarification if required and feel confident they know the steps to take should a concern arise
- The induction programme for new staff, casual workers, trustees and volunteers will include Whistle Blowing as part of the required Safeguarding training
- This policy is readily available on the Potential Plus UK website, in SharePoint, and on the Nucleus platform which hosts the Safeguarding training
- Information on each concern or incident will be shared with the Chair of Trustees
- Lessons learnt will inform improvements to policies and procedures

## 6 Training

Whistle Blowing training is embedded into the annual Safeguarding training for everyone covered under the scope of this policy.

## 7 Roles and Responsibilities.

### Board of Trustees

- Ensure that the law is upheld in regard to whistleblowing
- Policy and procedures are monitored and reviewed regularly

### Chief Executive

- Ensure that everyone covered by the scope of this policy knows and understands the policy
- Ensure that everyone new to Potential Plus UK is fully inducted and made aware of the policy and procedures
- Ensure that Potential Plus UK is a safe environment for staff, casual workers, trustees, volunteers, parents and children and young people to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices

### Employees, casual workers, trustees and volunteers

- Take appropriate action if they have a concern about an issue covered in Section 2: Scope

## 8 Related Standards, Policies and Processes

- Potential Plus UK's Safeguarding Policy 2023
- Potential Plus UK's Grievance Policy 2023
- Public Information Disclosures Act 1998  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/23/contents>
- GOV.UK Whistleblowing for Employees <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

## 9 Revision History

Version:	Date Approved:	Approved by:	Owner:	Author:	Summary of Change:	Review Date:
20230920	25 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2023	Board of Trustees	Board of Trustees	Joy Morgan	New policy	September 2026

## APPENDIX 1: Whistle Blowing Checklist

	Good practice	
1	The Whistle Blowing Policy readily available to PPUK staff, casual workers, trustees and volunteers	
2	Whistle blowing is both safe and acceptable	
3	Whistle blowing seen as a protective measure; keeping children safe, preventing malpractice, illegal activity and reputational damage	
4	Everyone knows what to do and who to contact if they have a concern	
5	Everyone knows that whistle blowers are protected by law from unfair treatment and dismissal	
6	Concerns raised are responded to in a reasonable time frame	
7	All reasonable steps are taken to keep the identity of whistle blowers confidential	
8	The named people understand what to do if a concern is raised	
9	External advice and support is encouraged, e.g. from the NSPCC Whistle Blowing Helpline	

## APPENDIX 2: Further information

NSPCC Whistle Blowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285 or [www.nspcc.org.uk/whistleblowing](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/whistleblowing)