



Whistleblowing Policy

2025 - 2026

Date Approved: August 2022
Review Date: August 2025
Next Review Date: August 2026

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1. Introduction

REACH is committed to the highest standards of transparency, probity, integrity, and accountability. This policy sets out a clear framework for staff, associates, contractors, and volunteers to raise serious concerns about potential wrongdoing, unlawful acts, or failures of practice in a safe and confidential way.

This procedure ensures that:

- Allegations are taken seriously and investigated appropriately.
- Whistleblowers are protected from victimisation, discrimination, or disadvantage.
- Concerns are raised in the public interest, not for personal gain or grievance.

This policy does not replace other REACH procedures such as the Complaints Procedure, Grievance and Disciplinary Policy, or Safeguarding Policy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees of REACH Learning Provision.
- Associates, contractors, and volunteers working on behalf of REACH.
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Concerns covered by this policy may include (but are not limited to):

- Conduct which is an offence or breach of the law.
- Miscarriages of justice.
- Serious health and safety risks.
- Fraud, corruption, or misuse of public funds.
- Sexual, physical, verbal abuse, bullying, or intimidation.
- Abuse of authority or unethical conduct.
- Safeguarding or child protection failures.

If the concern relates to day-to-day working conditions or line management issues, staff should use the Grievance Procedure.

3. Reporting Concerns

Concerns can be raised verbally or in writing. Where possible, whistleblowers should provide:

- Their name and contact details.
- Background and history (dates, names, relevant information).
- The reason for their concern.

Reports should normally be made to the Head of Provision. If the concern involves the Head of Provision or if this is inappropriate, whistleblowers may report directly to:

- Assistant Head and DSL Lead – Ellis Bone (ellisbone@reachlearningprovision.org)

In cases involving fraud or financial irregularity, the Provision's accountant will be informed.

In cases involving suspected criminal offences or safeguarding concerns, the Police or relevant safeguarding authorities will be contacted immediately.

Whistleblowers may be accompanied at meetings or interviews by a colleague or trade union representative.

4. Confidentiality & Protection

- All allegations will be treated confidentially. A whistleblower's identity will not be revealed without their consent, unless required by law or court proceedings.
- Anonymous allegations will be considered but may be more difficult to investigate. Factors such as seriousness, credibility, and available evidence will be assessed.
- Whistleblowers acting in good faith and in the public interest will not face reprisals, even if allegations are not substantiated.
- Malicious or frivolous allegations made without reasonable belief may result in disciplinary action.

5. Investigation & Action

- The Head of Provision/Director will acknowledge receipt of the allegation within 10 working days, outlining next steps and expected timescales.
- The allegation will be logged in the confidential Whistleblowing Register.
- Investigations will be carried out promptly, fairly, and proportionately.
- Where necessary, external agencies (Police, LADO, safeguarding partners, auditors) will be informed.
- Outcomes will be shared with the whistleblower, subject to legal constraints.

6. Support for Whistleblowers

REACH will:

- Provide support and advice throughout the process.
- Take steps to minimise difficulties caused by raising concerns.
- Arrange additional support if whistleblowers are required to give evidence in disciplinary or criminal proceedings.

7. Monitoring & Review

- A confidential Whistleblowing Register will record all allegations, actions taken, and outcomes.
- The Director and Head of Provision have overall responsibility for this policy and monitoring its effectiveness.
- An annual report (non-identifiable) will be made to the Board on whistleblowing activity and policy operation.
- This policy will be reviewed annually in line with safeguarding and employment law updates.