



Whistle-Blowing Policy

Version	2.0
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Policy Statement

Whistleblowing is the raising of a concern about malpractice within an organisation. Play Inclusion Project is committed to delivering high-quality services, promoting organisational accountability, and maintaining public confidence.

This policy protects staff and volunteers from victimisation or punishment when raising genuine concerns about misconduct or malpractice. It is underpinned by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which encourages raising concerns in the public interest.

A whistleblower may raise a concern if they reasonably believe it shows one or more of the following:

- A criminal offence
- A breach of legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- A danger to the environment
- A deliberate cover-up of information tending to show any of the above

Play Inclusion Project supports measures to protect whistleblowers and has procedures to ensure concerns are dealt with efficiently and confidentially.

Whistle-Blowing Procedure

- Staff and volunteers may raise a disclosure about evidenced misconduct without fear of retaliation.
- Play Inclusion Project has a duty to protect whistleblowers.
- Staff and volunteers have a duty to report misconduct to protect the charity, its services, and service users.
- All concerns will be treated confidentially. At certain stages, the identity of the whistleblower may need to be disclosed to those against whom allegations are made.
- Failure to report evidenced misconduct may result in disciplinary action.
- A list, though not exhaustive, of actions constituting misconduct and gross misconduct can be found in the employee handbook.

- Disclosures should be signed, dated, and in writing and made within one year of becoming aware of the misconduct.
- The CEO, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, will consider the disclosure and take appropriate action under the law.

If Retaliation Occurs

Staff or volunteers who believe they have been retaliated against may file a signed, dated, written complaint within 30 days.

Complaints should include:

- Name and work address of complainant
- Name and title of person the complaint is against
- Specific details of the adverse action
- Dates of occurrence
- Facts forming the basis of the complaint
- How the disclosure relates to the adverse action
- Remedy sought

Examples of adverse actions include: disciplinary suspension, termination, demotion, unfavourable performance evaluation, or change in employment conditions.

Within 60 days of receiving a complaint, the CEO will investigate and provide a signed, dated written reply including factual findings, conclusions, and any timely, specific remedies.

Appeals

- If dissatisfied with the reply or if no response is received within 60 days, staff may request an appeal meeting with the Charity Manager and Chairperson (or appropriate alternative if the complaint involves these individuals).
- A written, signed appeal request must be made within two weeks of the reply.
- The CEO will issue a final decision within 45 days of the appeal meeting, including findings, conclusions, and remedies.

Additional Guidelines

- The same complaint cannot be submitted twice if it is wholly or partly identical to a current or previous complaint.
- This policy does not prevent personnel action unrelated to the whistleblowing disclosure.
- All correspondence and meetings under this policy should be kept confidential.

- Good faith allegations not confirmed by investigation will not result in action against the whistleblower. Malicious or frivolous allegations may lead to disciplinary action.

External Reporting

If staff or volunteers wish to report concerns outside Play Inclusion Project, they may contact the Ofsted Whistleblowing Hotline:

Telephone: 0300 123 3155

Email: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk