



Whistleblowing Policy

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 provides protection from adverse treatment, harassment or victimisation for employees who report wrongdoing providing they act without malice. All Things SEN (ATS) regards any employee as a person who can make a public interest disclosure and who therefore can be protected by the Act. Public interest disclosures may include any of the following:

- a suspected or actual criminal offence
- financial or other maladministration
- academic or professional malpractice
- a risk to the health and safety of any individual
- environmental damage
- improper conduct or unethical behaviour
- referral to social services where action is needed to safeguard a child or young person

In relation to All Things SEN the Act is primarily considered to relate to raising concerns where vulnerable pupils and young people are thought to be at risk of harm through abuse, neglect or maladministration. ATS considers it the duty of any member of staff who has concerns or suspicions about the health or wellbeing of pupils, or has witnessed abuse, or has received an allegation or disclosure, to inform one of the Joint Directors or Lead Tutor in line with ATS Safeguarding Policies.

The identity of the person raising the matter will be kept confidential, if requested, for as long as possible, provided that a proper investigation can still take place. Unless there are specific reasons to the contrary, the person who made the disclosure will be informed of what action is to be taken and will be kept informed of progress during any investigation. ATS will, however, ensure the whistle blower is advised of the outcome of their disclosure at the appropriate time.

All Things SEN recognises that the law does not require the whistle blower to produce irrefutable evidence to support their claim, but places this responsibility in the hands of the people investigating, i.e. the Directors.

All Things SEN emphasises that anyone making false, vindictive allegations, or rash disclosures (to the media, for example, rather than through the proper channels), will not be protected by the Act. The policy and procedure relating to whistle blowing complements ATS policies and procedures relating to handling concerns and complaints about the service.

Free and confidential legal advice regarding whistle blowing can be obtained from the independent charity Public Concern At Work tel. 0207 404 6609 (9 am to 6 pm). You can also find support and information at the Home Office / NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (0800 028 0285)

Nothing in the ATS Whistle Blowing Policy prevents any employee from at any time reporting matters of concern about a child or young person, the ATS organisation, or an individual working for or leading the organisation, to an external enforcement agency or professional body, eg. Social Services, the police etc.

For guidance on making referrals to social services where you believe a child is at risk of harm and appropriate action is not being taken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, see the ATS Safeguarding Policy.

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