



## CCCC – Whistleblowing Policy

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to explain how the Chichester Child Contact Centre (CCCC) plans to ensure that all whistleblowing concerns raised within the charity are dealt with in a fair and consistent way.

### 2. Aim

It is important to the CCCC that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by staff, trustees and volunteers of the charity is reported and dealt with.

The aim of this policy is to:

- Provide avenues for you to raise genuine concerns and receive feedback on any action taken
- Allow you to take the matter further if you are dissatisfied with the outcome or response
- Reassure you that steps will be taken to protect you from reprisals or victimisation for whistleblowing in good faith

### 3. Introduction

Volunteers are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within their setting. However, they may not express their growing concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may be just suspicion of malpractice and wrongdoing at work.

CCCC is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with this commitment, we encourage volunteers and others with genuine concerns about any person linked with the Centre and or others e.g. Parents / Carers to come forward and voice those concerns.

This policy document makes it clear that volunteers, Parents / Carers and others can do so without fear of reprisals or victimisation. The Whistleblowing Policy is intended to encourage and enable volunteers and others to raise such concerns within CCCC rather than overlooking the problem.

The procedure allows volunteers, Parents / Carers and outside agencies to raise concerns about the Management / Staff /Volunteers of CCCC.

There are existing procedures in place to enable you to lodge a grievance relating to staffs' own employment, Parent / Carer concerns or complaints and issues raised by outside agencies. This Whistleblowing policy is intended to cover genuine concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures. That concern may be about something that:

- Is against the policies and procedures of CCCC
- Falls below established standards of practice
- Amounts to improper conduct
- Is a Health and Safety risk including risks to the public as well as children, other colleagues, Parents / Carers and others
- Contradicts the CCCC Code of Conduct
- Contributes to a safeguarding risk involving children in the care of CCCC



The procedure will be communicated to all volunteers as well as parents / carers.

#### 4. Whistleblowing Procedure

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with the Centre Coordinator or the Team Leader on duty. This depends, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who you think may be involved in the malpractice. For example, if you believe that the CCCC Coordinator or Team Leader is involved, you should approach the Chair of the Management Committee.

If you feel the Chair of the Management Committee may be involved, you should approach any member of the Management Committee. If this is not possible you should raise your concerns with the Chief Executive of NACCC.

#### Safeguarding Concerns

For safeguarding concerns involving a staff member or volunteer, you should initially consult the CCCC Coordinator. If you suspect they or the Management Committee may be involved, you should contact the NACCC Safeguarding Manager for advice. You may also contact your local authority Children's Services Referrals Department. Contact details are provided at the end of this policy.

#### Raising Concerns in Writing

Concerns are better raised in writing. You are advised to set out background and history of your concerns, giving names, dates, and places, where possible, and the reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation. The earlier you express your concern, the easier it is for The Child Contact Centre, NACCC or your local authority Children's Services Safeguarding Team to take action.

You are not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, but you must demonstrate that there are sufficient grounds for initial enquiries.

#### Anonymous Allegations

You are strongly encouraged to put your name to any allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful. Anonymous allegations will be considered and any action taken at the discretion of CCCC and in conjunction with the relevant agencies where appropriate.

In exercising this discretion, the following factors will be considered when deciding how to deal with any allegations:

- The seriousness of the issues raised
- The credibility of the allegation
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources

#### 5. Responding to Allegations

The action taken by CCCC will depend on the nature of the concern. Matters raised may:

- Be investigated internally
- Be referred to the police



Concerns referred to NACCC or Children's Services will be handled in accordance with their procedures. Individuals who are the subject of an allegation will be given appropriate information at the correct stage of the process.

Initial enquiries will determine whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. Concerns that fall within specific procedures (e.g. safeguarding or discrimination) will normally be referred under those procedures.

Some concerns may be resolved through agreed action without the need for a formal investigation.

### Clarifying Whistleblowing Complaints vs. General Complaints

- The steps in this section relate only to concerns raised under this Whistleblowing Policy that is, concerns involving wrongdoing, misconduct, malpractice, or safeguarding risks
- This procedure does not apply to general complaints about the day-to-day running of the Centre. Those should be raised through the separate CCCC Complaints Policy, which provides a dedicated process for routine concerns or dissatisfaction with services

### Process for Whistleblowing Complaints

- CCCC will send written confirmation acknowledging receipt of the whistleblowing concern within 5 days
- The concern will be investigated promptly, and CCCC will endeavour to begin enquiries within 5 days of receipt
- A written response will be provided outlining how the concern has been addressed

## 6. Confidentiality

CCCC will do its best to protect your identity when you raise a concern. However, during an investigation, it may become necessary to disclose the source of information, and you may be asked to provide a statement as part of the evidence.

## 7. Malicious or Vexatious Allegations – Staff and Volunteers

If you raise a concern in good faith but it is not substantiated, no action will be taken against you. However, malicious or vexatious allegations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with CCCC procedures.

## 8. Taking Your Concern Further

If the complaint has not been dealt with in a manner which is satisfactory to the volunteer or Parent / Carer or others involved, then they can contact NACCC directly as follows:

**National Association of Child Contact Centres**

**Telephone: 01159484557**

**Email: [contact@nacc.org.uk](mailto:contact@nacc.org.uk)**

**Website: [www.nacc.org.uk](http://www.nacc.org.uk)**

**Note:** NACCC is a membership organisation which has no responsibility for the staffing or day to day running of the Centre. However, they do advise, support and accredit centres and require member Centres to work to the highest standards.