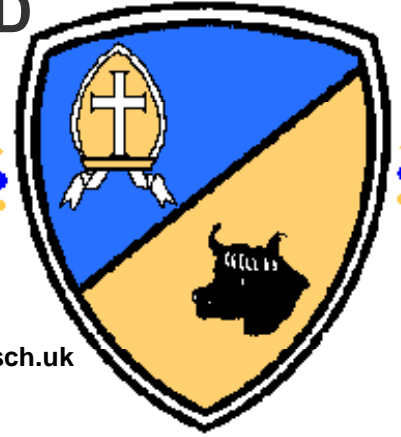


# ST. LUKE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL



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## St Luke's C of E Forest School Policy

Date of Policy: 2023

Review Date: 2026

### 1. Introduction

As a Church of England school, St Luke's is built on a core set of Christian values, where children feel happy and cared for. Here they find, love, joy, hope and peace.

John 13: 34-35 says, 'Love one another. As I have loved you... By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.'

So at St Luke's we aim to be disciples by:-

FOLLOWING IN GOD'S WAY,  
LEARNING DAY BY DAY,  
WORKING WITH ONE ANOTHER,  
CARING FOR EACH OTHER.

### LINKS TO OUR MISSION STATEMENT AND AIMS

Our mission and aims form the basis of all our policies and practice. This policy supports the following aims of our school:

- To ensure that every child is valued as an individual.
- To serve the community by providing an education of the highest quality.
- To endeavour to live out our Christian values in our everyday lives.
- To be tolerant and show understanding and mutual respect at all times.

At St Luke's C.E. Primary, we value the abilities and achievements of all our pupils. We are committed to providing the best environment for each and every child to reach their full potential - emotionally, socially, physically and academically.

All pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum. The staff at our school recognises the need for

*"teaching to be of a high quality, differentiated and personalised, to meet the needs of the majority of children and understand that some children need educational support that is additional or different to this."* (SEN Code of Practice for 0-25)

As a school we aim to ensure that such provision is made for those who need it and every teacher is responsible for ensuring that every child accesses this entitlement.

This policy has been developed with the teachers, parents and governors of the school in accordance with the SEN Code of Practice 0-25 guidance (2014).

Our Forest School policies and procedures are in line with whole school policies and procedures. Many are the same, some have been adapted and others created specifically for Forest School purposes. Any part that is specific to Forest School has been highlighted.

- Fire safety
- Accidents, incidents and near misses
- Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Administration of medicines
- Whistleblowing
- First Aid

Should you require access to any additional policies or procedures, please refer to the school website: [St Luke's C of E Primary: Policies \(saintlukes.wigan.sch.uk\)](http://saintlukes.wigan.sch.uk) or staff handbook.

# Fire Safety

Procedures for fire and other emergency evacuation are also detailed in the staff handbook. Emergency exits, assembly points and assembly point instructions are clearly identified by safety signs and notices. Fire risk assessment of the premises will be reviewed regularly by an external consultant through the school's SLA with DBE Services. Emergency evacuations are practised at least once a term. The fire alarm is a loud continuous siren. Fire alarm testing will take place once a week out of school hours. Whole school fire evacuation practice will take place a minimum of once per term. New staff will be trained in fire safety and all staff and pupils will be made aware of any new fire risks.

In the event of a fire: The alarm will be raised immediately by whoever discovers the fire and emergency services contacted. 999 must be dialled when fire occurs - alarm activation alone will not summon the emergency services.

Evacuation procedures will also begin immediately and all staff, visitors and pupils must 'get out and stay out'. Fire extinguishers may be used by trained staff only, and only then if fire blocks the escape route and are confident they can use them without putting themselves or others at risk.

Staff and pupils will congregate at the assembly points. The assembly points are located on the main junior playground and at the top of the school main entrance gates.

Class teachers will take a register of pupils, which will then be checked against the attendance register of that day.

The School Admin Officer will take a register of all visitors, contractors and staff.

Staff and pupils will remain outside the building until the emergency services say it is safe to re-enter.

Fire prevention measures are in place on the Forest School site, meaning no waste or hazardous materials are left on site and are safely disposed of. It is the Forest School leader's responsibility to ensure any fire is properly extinguished at the end of each session. Any participants are supervised when using the fire pit area during a Forest School session, and the fire pit must not be used outside of sessions.

The fire pit area is enclosed with logs and is situated away from any low hanging branches to prevent spread of any fire. The fire pit area will be regularly checked and maintained to ensure no low hanging branches encroach this space. Seating logs will be positioned at least 1.5 metres away from the fire pit area, and exit paths are available at each corner.

A fire blanket, buckets of water and a burns kit will always be situated near to the fire pit in case of emergencies.

Only the Forest School Leader is permitted to light a fire, unless there is direct supervision. If children are adding fuel to the fire, this should also be done with direct supervision. No sticks or other materials should be thrown into the fire from the seating

circle. Children should remain seated at the seating circle when a fire is lit, and should only stand up with permission.

At the end of a session, when the fire has been extinguished by the Forest School Leader, the water buckets should be poured onto the fire and ash stirred until no smoke or steam remains.

## *Accidents, incidents and near misses*

An accident form will be completed as soon as possible if an accident occurs, by the member of staff or first aider who deals with it. Duplicate copies are made for the parent and for school records. As much detail as possible will be supplied when reporting an accident. Information about injuries will also be kept in the accident books or a pupil's educational record. Records held in the first aid and accident book will be retained by the school for a minimum of three years, in accordance with regulation 25 of the Social Security (Claims and Payments) Regulations 1979 and the school's GDPR policy. The school may keep the record within the child's electronic or physical record for a minimum of seven years or until the child reaches the age of 25, whichever is the later.

In the case of a serious accident a local authority accident form will need to be completed. A form must be requested from the school office. In the case of serious accidents, a minimum retention period of 15 years is applied, however the school may keep the record within the child's electronic or physical record for a minimum of seven years or until the child reaches the age of 25, whichever is the later.

### **Reporting to the Health and Safety Executive**

The school and local authority will keep a record of any accident which results in a reportable injury, disease, or dangerous occurrence as defined in the RIDDOR 2013 legislation (regulations 4, 5, 6 and 7). The School Business Manager will report these to the Local Authority Health and Safety Consultant and Health and Safety Executive as soon as is reasonably practicable and in any event within 10 days of the incident.

Reportable injuries, diseases or dangerous occurrences include: Death. Specified injuries.

Specified injuries are: Fractures, other than to fingers, thumbs and toes. Amputations. Any injury likely to lead to permanent loss of sight or reduction in sight. Any crush injury to the head or torso causing damage to the brain or internal organs. Serious burns (including scalding). Any scalping requiring hospital treatment. Any loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia. Heat-induced illness, or requires resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours. Injuries where an employee is away from work or unable to perform their normal work duties for more than seven consecutive days. Where an accident leads to someone being taken to hospital. Where something happens that does not result in an injury, but could have done. Near-miss events that do not result in an injury, but could have done.

Examples of near-miss events relevant to schools include, but are not limited to: The collapse or failure of load-bearing parts of lifts and lifting equipment. The accidental

release of a biological agent likely to cause severe human illness. The accidental release or escape of any substance that may cause a serious injury or damage to health. An electrical short circuit or overload causing a fire or explosion.

Information on how to make a RIDDOR report is available here: How to make a RIDDOR report - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm>

### **Notifying parents**

The Headteacher will inform parents of any accident or injury sustained by a pupil in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and any first aid treatment given, on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Minor injuries will be reported to parents via an accident slip. Where the injury is to the head the parents will be contacted immediately.

### **Reporting child protection agencies**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Lead will notify the Wigan Safeguarding Board and Early Years Team of any serious accident or injury to, or the death of, a pupil in the Early Years Foundation Stage while in the school's care.

### **Reporting to Ofsted**

The Headteacher will notify Ofsted of any serious accident, illness or injury to, or death of, a pupil in the Early Years Foundation Stage while in the school's care. This will happen as soon as is reasonably practicable, and no later than 14 days after the incident.

### **Forest School**

A first aid kit, including a burns kit, will be taken to the site for all Forest School sessions. The Forest School Leader is Outdoor First Aid trained, and the supporting members of staff are also first aid trained. Any accidents will be recorded in the accident book and treated as per the school's accident policy.

Incidents and near misses will also be logged by the Forest School leader, as this will inform risk assessments going forward, allowing changes and adaptations to be made where necessary as a result.

Any medication i.e. inhalers, will be taken up to the forest school site, for easy access should they be required during a session.

## *Special Educational Needs (SEN)*

### **1. Introduction**

At St Luke's C.E. Primary, we value the abilities and achievements of all our pupils. We are committed to providing the best environment for each and every child to reach their full potential - emotionally, socially, physically and academically. All pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum. The staff at our school recognises the need for "teaching to be of a high quality, adapted and personalised, to meet the needs of the majority of

children and understand that some children need educational support that is additional or different to this." (SEN Code of Practice for 0-25)

As a school we aim to ensure that such provision is made for those who need it and every teacher is responsible for ensuring that every child accesses this entitlement. This policy has been developed with the teachers, parents and governors of the school in accordance with the SEN Code of Practice 0-25 guidance (2015).

**AIMS (The longer view)** The aim for all the children in our school, including those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, is to be the best that they can be. We have high aspirations and expectations for all pupils.

**OBJECTIVES (to do this we will):**

- Ensure that all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which ensures progression and is appropriate to age, ability and aptitude.
- Identify and provide for those children who may need more support in school.
- Operate a whole school approach to the management and provision of support for special educational needs and disability.
- Provide an Inclusion Leader who will:
  - ~ Manage the SEN[D] Inclusion Policy.
  - ~ Provide support and advice for all staff working with special educational needs pupils.
  - ~ Develop and maintain partnership with parents.
  - ~ Ensure access to the curriculum for all pupils.

**2. Identifying Children with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEN[D])**

The Code of Practice states: "A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools"

It identifies four broad areas of need:

1. Communication and language
2. Cognition and learning
3. Social, mental and emotional health
4. Sensory and/or physical

Many children have difficulties that fit clearly into one of these areas; some have needs that span two or more areas; for others, the precise nature of their need may not be clear at the outset. At our school, we consider the needs of the whole child, which will include things that are not necessarily SEN[D] but will also impact on a child's progress and attainment -

- Attendance and punctuality
- Health and welfare
- English as an additional language (EAL)
- Being in receipt of the Pupil Premium
- Being a child of a serviceman/woman

### **3. A Graduated Approach to SEN[D]**

At St Luke's we take a graduated approach to SEN[D], as outlined in the Code of Practice.

Within planning, teachers will set suitable learning challenges and respond to pupils' needs. All children receive inclusive quality first teaching in our school (with work differentiated for a child's needs) and most will make expected or better than expected progress. A minority of pupils have particular learning difficulties that could create barriers to learning. For these, the class teacher will identify a child's need and make arrangements for any adjustments or interventions. This should enable the pupils to participate effectively in all curriculum activities.

We are a dyslexia friendly school; this means that we aim to break down these barriers to learning and take into account the different learning styles of the pupils.

Pupils may have special educational needs throughout, or at any time during, their school career. This policy ensures that curriculum planning for pupils with special educational needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the pupil.

**Identification** - If, after quality first personal teaching, adjustments and interventions, a child has not made adequate progress then in discussion with the Teacher, the Parents, the Child, and Inclusion Leader, a child will be deemed to have SEN[D] and will go on the SEN[D] register. Sources of information will be discussions already held, teacher assessment and observation.

**Assessment of need and intervention** - The Class Teacher, Child, Parents and Inclusion Leader will put together a full picture of the child, identifying areas which require more specific support. Sources of information may include discussion, standardised tests, profiling tools and observations to give us a greater understanding of the child's strengths and needs. We will then develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) based on small, achievable targets, which will be reviewed regularly to help support learning.

**Further help and advice with intervention** - If a child does not make adequate progress, we will seek advice from external agencies - Targeted Education Support Service (TESS), Educational Psychologists, etc. This should give us a greater insight into what we can do to best support the child and will be reflected in the IEP/ IBP.

**EHC Referral** - If a child is still struggling to make progress with a lot of intervention in place, or if they have severe health issues, then, in discussion with parents and outside agencies, we may decide to apply for funding through an Education Health Care Plan (EHC Plan).

#### **4. Managing the SEN[D] Register**

The Inclusion Leader will provide governors with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practice of the school. Each child's progress will be reviewed at Pupil Progress Meetings with the Senior Leadership Team.

IEPs/IBPs will be reviewed regularly by the class teacher and those supporting the child, with support from the Inclusion Leader, and will be amended as necessary to reflect the needs of the pupil, following the guidance outlined in the Code of Practice.

#### **5. Educational Inclusion**

Throughout curriculum provision, we will respect the fact that pupils:

- have different educational and behavioural needs;
- require different strategies for learning;
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

At St. Luke's, we provide equality of opportunity. Similarities and differences between people and cultures are explored sensitively. Equal treatment is given to all genders, and non-stereotypical behaviour / views are positively encouraged. All children will have equal opportunity to reach their full potential regardless of their race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. Children with special needs are given extra support to allow them to access the full curriculum. We aim to overcome any barriers to learning, e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia, which can hinder children's learning, by following specific programmes to cater for their individual needs. Teachers will respond to pupils' needs by:

- providing them with the support that their needs require;
- developing their understanding through the use of available resources and by providing necessary learning experiences;
- planning for their full participation in learning, including physical and practical activities;
- helping them to manage their behaviour and emotions and take part in learning effectively and safely. As bullying can sometimes be an issue for pupils with SEN[D], teachers will be particularly vigilant for this and will take any necessary steps to prevent/address it. (See Anti-bullying policy for further details of this.)

#### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage (The Reception class in our school), children's progress is closely monitored, using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. This means that children who may need extra support can be identified at an early age.

#### **6. Storing and Managing Information**

Class teachers will keep copies of information and assessments relevant to their teaching of each child. They will keep copies of current IEPs/ IBPs and outside agency recommendations. These will be in a SEN[D] file stored securely within the classroom. The Inclusion Leader will also have a copy of these. Information about your child will only be shared within school with those who need to know in order to support their learning.



Confidential information, and more extensive information, will be stored securely within school. This will not be shared with any outside agencies unless there is parental permission to do so.

## **7. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Head Teacher is responsible for the day to day management of the policy. The Inclusion Leader is responsible for the day to day operation of the policy and will:

- act as a link with all external agencies;
- liaise with other Inclusion leaders from primary/secondary schools;
- monitor and evaluate the special educational needs provision and report to the governing body;
- contribute to in-service training of staff;
- manage a range of resources, human and material, linked to pupils with special educational needs;
- liaise with all support staff who work with the pupils on a day-to day basis;
- meet with the school's link TESS teacher on a regular basis
- attend planning meetings each year with the headteacher, link TESS teacher and the school's educational psychologist;

All members of teaching staff are aware of, and are responsible for, identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEN[D]. Some Teaching Assistants have specific intervention training and will be deployed accordingly.

## **8. The role of the governing body**

The governing body, in co-operation with the Headteacher and Inclusion Leader, aims to secure the necessary provision for any pupil identified as having special educational needs .The governors have a duty to make provision for pupils with special educational needs and they will consult the Local Authority, and other schools when appropriate, in order to carry out this role.

The governing body admits pupils with special educational needs into school in line with the school's agreed admissions policy. The governing body reports annually to parents on the success of the school's policy for pupils with special educational needs. The governing body has regard for the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties towards all pupils with special educational needs.

## **9. Allocation of Resources**

The Inclusion Leader is responsible for the operational management of any special needs resources that are needed within the school, including the provision for pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan. The school also recognises the potential of new technologies to support communication, teaching and learning for children and young people with SEN and/or disabilities. Use is made of these where it is felt technology will benefit an individual child's development and help remove some of their barriers to learning. Note will also be taken of outside agency recommendations when planning the use of these.

The Headteacher will inform the governing body of how the funding allocated to support special educational needs is to be used. The Headteacher and the Inclusion Leader will meet to discuss how to use funds directly related to Education Health Care Plans.

## **10. Partnership with Parents**

The school prospectus contains details of our policy for special educational needs and the arrangements made for these pupils in our school. The school's offer of provision for those with additional needs (SEN[D] Information Report) is on the website within the Special Educational Needs and Disability link.

At all stages of the special needs process, the school keeps parents informed and involved in the provision made for their child's needs, encouraging them to make an active contribution to their child's education.

Parents are kept informed of the targets on their child's Individual Education or Behaviour Plan. Parents are required to read and sign a copy of their child's IEP/IBP and return it to school. Teachers or the Inclusion Leader will readily explain targets to parents if there are any queries. We keep parents informed of any outside interventions and we provide clear information relating to their child's needs.

## **11. Dealing with Complaints**

Parents / carers wishing to discuss any aspects of their child's progress should, in the first instance, make an appointment to speak with the class teacher. If they wish to pursue the matter further, they should speak to the Inclusion Leader or Head Teacher. Parents have the right to make a formal complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors, if they so wish, or to the Local Authority if they are dissatisfied with school provision. The School Compliments and Complaints Policy is available on the School Website.

## **12. Forest School**

We are committed to providing all children with every opportunity to succeed in what they do, to the highest of their ability. As per the school's SEN policy, the Forest School Leader will ensure the opportunities and activities are suitably adapted so that **all** children are able to access the session. This may include, for example, providing additional time to complete activities, modifying equipment/resources and possibly offering alternative activities. On some occasions, additional adults may be required, as some children may need 1:1 or small group support depending on the activity.

# Administration of Medicines

No pupil will be given medication without a parent's written consent. This consent will also give details of the medication to be administered, including:

- Name of medication
- Dose
- Method of administration
- Time and frequency of administration
- Other treatment
- Any side effects

School will provide written consent for agreeing to administer the medication and staff will complete and sign record sheets each time they give medication to a pupil stating the dosage and administration which will be witnessed by a second adult.

If pupils can take their medication themselves, staff will supervise this, bearing in mind the safety of other pupils. Written parental consent is necessary for this. Staff who have had training will be able to administer medication

## **Emergency procedures**

Allocated staff have regular training in First Aid and know how to call the emergency services. If the emergency services are called the child's parents/guardians will be informed as soon as the emergency call has been made. Priority will be given to summoning help to preserve life. A pupil taken to hospital by ambulance will be accompanied by a member of staff until the pupil's parent or guardian arrives.

In such circumstances, a copy of the child's data sheet and where appropriate, a healthcare plan will be given to the emergency services.

## **Administration of medication in epilepsy and febrile convulsions, and anaphylaxis procedure**

The administration of medication for these conditions requires specific training and procedures.

Administration will only be in extreme circumstances where:

- recommended by the child's healthcare team/physician
- not doing so would endanger the life of the child
- training has been given by the healthcare team
- it forms part of the child's personal healthcare plan and is reviewed regularly

Administration will be supported by the school's intimate care policy and a child's individual health care plan. In these extreme situations it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide rescue medication and ensure that it is replaced as required.

School will follow the recommendations of the healthcare team/physician with regard to frequency of training.

## **Forest School**

The Forest School Leader will be aware of any children in their group with short- or long-term medical conditions. Inhalers will be kept in the first aid kit and administered by either the child/adult (where appropriate) if necessary. This will be recorded as per the school's policy.

Should children require the administration of their Epi-Pen during a session, this should be collected by an additional adult from the office storage and administered as per the policy above.

# Whistleblowing

## **General Introduction**

### **1. Introduction**

Whistleblowing is when an individual 'makes a disclosure in the public interest' about a matter which has come to their attention through work. Whistleblowing occurs when a worker raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example members of the public. The disclosure may be about the alleged wrongful conduct of their employer, a colleague, or any third party. The whistleblowing policy covers all employees, volunteers, trainees, agency workers and contractors.

Typically, the whistleblower is not directly, personally affected by the danger or illegality, although they may be. Personal complaints such as harassment, discrimination or breaches of their own employment contract, are not usually treated as whistleblowing and should be handled according to the School's Grievance or Dignity at Work policies.

Examples of the situations covered may include:

- Financial malpractice (including Wigan Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations relating to the use of public funds)
- Criminal offences
- Behaviour amounting to improper conduct
- Matters which fall below established standards of practice
- Risks to health and safety
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or contravening School's policy
- A miscarriage of justice
- Environmental damage

### **2. Purpose**

The Governing Body of this School and Wigan Council are committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability and to working in close partnership in resolving matters raised through this Whistleblowing Policy.

Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within their workplace environment. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to their employer. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances, it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice. In line with these commitments, employees with serious concerns about any aspect of the School's work are encouraged to come forward and voice those concerns without fear of reprisals from the School, their colleagues or Wigan Council.

This Whistleblowing Policy is intended to encourage and enable staff to raise serious concerns within the School or Wigan Council rather than overlooking a problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside. However, the policy does not override any statutory rights an employee may have.

### **3.Safeguards**

#### **Harassment or Victimisation**

The Governing Body and Wigan Council recognise that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal from those responsible for the malpractice. The Governing Body and the Council will not tolerate harassment or victimisation by the School, their colleagues or the Council and will do what it lawfully can to protect employees when they raise concerns under this policy.

This does not mean that if an employee is already the subject of disciplinary or redundancy procedures, that those procedures will be halted as a result of their whistleblowing.

#### **Confidentiality**

The Governing Body and the Council will do its best to protect the identity of an employee when a concern is raised and the employee does not want their name to be disclosed. However, it must be appreciated that the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by the employee may be required as part of the evidence, particularly if the Police or External Auditors or the Courts become involved. The employer may be required by law to disclose the source of the information, in which case confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In order to take effective action, the Governing Body and/or Wigan Council will need proper evidence which may be required to stand up to examination in Courts or Tribunals.

#### **Raising a concern anonymously**

This policy encourages employees to put their names to an allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful, but they will be considered at the discretion of the Governing Body and Wigan Council.

In exercising the discretion, the factors to be taken into account would include:

- the seriousness of the issues raised;

- the credibility of the concern; and
- the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

### **Unfounded concerns**

If a concern is made under this policy which was made in the public interest, but it is not founded in the outcome of the investigation, no action will be taken against the employee raising the concern. This includes protection for the employee of no less favourable treatment for raising the concern, by the School / Wigan Council or the employee's colleagues. If an employee has concerns about this, they should raise these through the appropriate internal policies and procedures detailed in section 1.

If, however, an employee makes a malicious or vexatious allegation, an investigation will take place to determine whether the employee had a reasonable belief that the concern was in the public interest at the time. If it is found that it was not, then disciplinary action may be taken.

### **4. The responsible officer**

The Assistant Director - Legal (as Monitoring Officer) has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy. They maintain a record of concerns raised including the outcomes and will report as necessary to the School and Wigan Council. If the employee requests their identity to remain anonymous, then the Assistant Director-Legal will do what they lawfully can to protect the employee's identity but they may be obliged to disclose it by law to the Police, the External Auditor or the Courts.

### **5. The Law**

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) is the key piece of UK legislation protecting individuals who 'blow the whistle' in the public interest. The law protects 'workers', which includes employees. Disclosures in the "public interest" would include those which highlight misconduct, wrongdoing or risks to the public, promote openness or transparency, or promote freedom of expression. The scope of "public interest" is, therefore, potentially very broad. The legislation is clear however, that "public interest" is not the same as "what the public is interested in". In addition, if an employee reports their concern to the media, in most cases they will lose their whistleblowing law rights.

A worker will have to show three things to claim PIDA protection:

1. that he or she made a disclosure
2. that they followed the correct disclosure procedure
3. that they were dismissed or suffered a detriment as a result of making the disclosure

Workers who make a 'protected disclosure' can make a claim to an employment tribunal if they're treated badly or dismissed; however, they must now be able to show that the disclosure was made at the time in the reasonable belief that it was "in the public interest". This protection however does not detract nor remove from the employee's own responsibilities in accordance with their role e.g. you must still take actions to respond to a safeguarding concern with a child, in line with safeguarding procedures, in addition to

raising a whistleblowing complaint highlighting the cause of the incident which is in the public interest.

The School and Wigan Council must also be aware that confidentiality clauses used in settlement agreements do not affect a worker's right to make a protected disclosure. In addition, an employee who makes a protected disclosure after their employment has terminated will still be protected by the legislation.

#### **4 How to raise a concern**

##### **Raising a concern to your employer**

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with your immediate manager e.g. Head of Key Stage or Department, a member of the Senior Management Team or the Headteacher. This depends, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is thought to be involved in the malpractice. For example, if you believe that leadership is involved, you should approach the Headteacher, Chair of Governors, or alternatively, the Director of Children's Services for Wigan Council, the Chief Executive, the Deputy Chief Executive or the Assistant Director - Legal.

For Voluntary Aided schools, the Council would still be responsible for managing and responding to a whistleblowing complaint as the authority however the Schools Governing Body has primary responsibility to ensure they link with Wigan Council regarding the complaint.

For Academies, the Council does not have any involvement in managing the response however Academies are advised to contact Legal Services at Wigan Council if they require legal advice (at cost).

Concerns are better raised in writing. You are invited to set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible, and the reasons why you are particularly concerned about the situation. If you do not feel able to put your concern in writing, you can telephone or meet the appropriate person listed above.

The earlier you express the concern, the easier it is to take action.

Although you are not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, you will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are sufficient grounds for your concern. To raise the matter on your behalf, you may invite a union or professional association representative or a work colleague however they must not be directly involved with the matter relating to the complaint. You may also have such a companion to represent you at any meeting which is held relating to your concern.

##### **How the school will respond**

The School and/or Council will respond to your concerns.

The action taken by the School and/or Council will depend on the nature of the concern as determined by the Assistant Director - Legal and/or Assistant Director - HR&OD Services. The School and/or Council could decide that the matters raised may:

- be investigated internally

- be referred to the Police
- be referred to the External Auditor
- form the subject of an independent inquiry

In order to protect individuals and the School / Council, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and if so, what form it should take. The overriding principle, which the School and/or Council will have in mind, is the public interest. Concerns or allegations, which fall within the scope of specific procedures (for example, child protection or discrimination issues), will normally be referred for consideration under those procedures.

Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation. If urgent action is required this will be taken before any investigation is conducted.

Within ten school working days of a concern being received, the person you raised your concern to e.g. your immediate line manager, Chair of Governors, Headteacher etc will write to you:

- acknowledging that the concern has been received
- indicating how it proposes to deal with the matter if possible at such an early stage
- giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response if possible at such an early stage
- telling you whether any initial enquiries have been made, and
- telling you whether further investigations will take place, and if not, why not.

The amount of contact between the persons considering the issues and the employee raising these concerns, will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided. If necessary, further information will be sought from the employee.

When any meeting is arranged, which can be off-site if you wish, you have the right to be accompanied by your chosen companion. This may be a union or professional association representative or a work colleague however they must not be directly involved with the matter relating to the complaint. A summary of the meeting will be made for record keeping purposes, which you may have a copy of if you wish. You are invited to make personal notes of the meeting if you prefer.

The School and Council will do what it lawfully can to minimise any difficulties that you may experience as a result of raising a concern. For instance, if you are required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings, the School and/or the Council will advise you about the procedure. The School or Council cannot however provide legal representation for you.

Where appropriate, counselling may be provided, which can be accessed through the Health Management Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) (if your School is subscribed to this service) or the employee's GP. In addition, the Education Support Partnership (formerly the Teachers Support Network) is available to provide support on a wide range of issues. The School may also wish to explore providing mediation for individuals, to help rebuild trust and relationships in the workplace. This can be provided by contacting HR.



The School accepts that you need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. Therefore, subject to legal and confidentiality constraints, you will receive information about the outcomes of any investigations, within the confines of the School's internal policies and procedures.

### **How to pursue the matter further**

This policy is intended to provide employees with an avenue to raise concerns within the School. If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your concerns, or if you feel it is right to take the matter outside the School, an employee may raise their concerns to the appropriate 'prescribed persons'. The relevant prescribed person depends on the subject matter of the disclosure.

Prescribed persons have individual policies and procedures for handling concerns and complaints. Generally, these will be accessible on their websites.

Alternatively, the employee may wish to raise their concerns with:

- the Police
- a Solicitor
- Wigan Council's External Auditor
- relevant professional bodies / regulatory organisations
- their trade union/professional association
- ACAS

### **5. Forest School**

Should the Forest School Leader, or any supporting adults have any concerns during a Forest School session, they should refer to, and follow the procedures above for Whistleblowing.

# First Aid

First Aid will be administered as per the accident policy above.

The Forest School Leader and any support staff are first aid trained (either outdoor, paediatric or general).

First aid and burns kits are kept in the same designated location for each session and support staff will know where this is too.

Inside the first aid kit will be:

- PPE - gloves, aprons and masks for first aider
- Plasters
- Antiseptic wipes
- Gauze
- Sterile water
- Bandages
- Sterile dressings
- Scissors

The first aid kit will be maintained regularly to ensure there is no out of date equipment present, and to check the level of resources is adequate.



SCHOOL MEMBER



