



Fresh Arts Whistleblowing Policy

Date of issue:	01/04/2026
Status: This Whistleblowing Policy is effective from April 2026. This policy is the recommended policy for adoption by the Governing Bodies of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. Advice and support on this policy is available from the Fresh Arts Safe HR service.	

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1.1	Fresh Arts is committed to conducting its business with honesty and integrity, and expects all staff to maintain high standards in accordance with their contractual obligations and the company's policies and procedures.	
1.2	However, all organisations face the risk of things going wrong from time to time, or of unknowingly harbouring illegal or unethical conduct. A culture of openness and accountability is essential in order to prevent such situations occurring or to address them when they do occur.	
1.3	This Whistleblowing policy explains how Fresh Arts will meet their obligations in relation to the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) 1998 and the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013. Both Acts aim to protect employees against victimisation if they make a protected disclosure.'	
1.4	Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2016) also applies a statutory duty for Fresh Arts to provide a mechanism in which individuals are able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practice.	

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The aims of this policy are:
- To assist staff in feeling confident about raising concerns regarding fraud, malpractice and improper conduct within the school.
 - To ensure workers using this policy are protected from reprisals or victimisation if they have a reasonable belief that they have made a disclosure which is in the public interest.
 - To ensure that there is a clear process for whistleblowing concerns to be raised and addressed.
 - To ensure that workers receive a response to their concerns; and that workers are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy may be used by all workers at the school to raise concerns of wrong doing in the workplace that is in the public interest.

4. Definitions

- 4.1 Worker: The term 'Worker' is used in this policy to broadly include employees (freelance and PAYE), contractors, trainees and a person who is or was subject to a contract to undertake work or services for the school.
- 4.2 Whistleblowing takes place when a Worker discloses information regarding a wrongdoing in the workplace that is in the public interest. This could involve an individual or group of individuals involved in breaking the law in the workplace or an individual attempting to cover up an unlawful act.
- 4.3 It is distinct from the grievance procedure which should be used if an employee has a complaint relating to their personal circumstances in the workplace. Personal grievances (e.g. bullying, harassment, discrimination) are not covered by whistleblowing legislation, unless a particular case is in the public interest. Such complaints should be raised by employees under the grievance policy.
- 4.4 Concerns about wrongdoing within the school such as malpractice, breach of health and safety law or any other illegal or unethical act either on the part of management, the governing body or by fellow employees may be raised using this procedure.
- 4.5 The PIDA1998 lists six concerns which can be raised The worker must disclose information that relates to one of these six types of "relevant failure":
- A criminal offence has been committed, or is likely to be committed.
 - A person has failed or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which they are subject. For example, a breach of contract, or a breach of statutory requirement.
 - A miscarriage of justice has occurred or is likely to occur.
 - The health and safety of an individual has been or is likely to be endangered.
 - The environment has been or is likely to be damaged.
 - Information regarding any of the above has or is likely to be deliberately concealed.

- 4.6 Any malicious allegations made under the whistleblowing policy may result in an internal investigation by Fresh Arts and possibly an investigation by the police. Similarly any inappropriate behaviour from other employees due to the whistleblowing policy being used may be subject to disciplinary procedures.
- 4.7 Whistleblowing concerns usually relate to the conduct of the organization staff, but they may sometimes relate to the actions of a third party, such as a service provider. The law allows staff to raise a concern in the public interest with a third party, where the member of staff reasonably believes it relates mainly to their actions or something that is legally their responsibility. However, staff are encouraged to report such concerns internally first.

5. Fraud

- 5.1 Disclosures regarding fraud are dealt with separately under the Council's Fraud Response Plan and any allegations should be reported to the investigations@brent.gov.uk or reported directly through the website at <https://www.brent.gov.uk/the-council-and-democracy/fraud-and-corruption>

6. Assurances to Whistleblowers

- 6.1 If a worker makes a disclosure of information on one or more of the matters listed in 4.5 above and they have a reasonable belief that the information shows one of the six relevant failures the Worker will not suffer any detriment (including dismissal), even if after investigation it transpires that the concern is unfounded. The school will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of any worker raising a genuine concern and will take appropriate action, including disciplinary procedures, to protect workers raising a concern which is in the public interest.

If a Worker requests that their identity is protected, Fresh Arts will try and protect their anonymity as far as is possible. If the situation arises where the Fresh Arts is unable to resolve the concern without revealing the worker's identity (for instance because the Worker's evidence is needed in court), Fresh Arts will discuss with the Worker how the matter should proceed. However, it must also be stated that if a Worker chooses not to disclose their identity it will be much more difficult for Fresh Arts to look into the matter or to protect an individual's position or to give feedback.

6.2 The complainant is encouraged to put their name to any allegations as a result. Please note that:

- Staff must believe the disclosure of information is in the public interest;
- Staff must believe it to be substantially true;
- Staff must not act maliciously; or knowingly make false allegations; and
- Staff must not seek any personal gain.

7. Procedure for Making Complaints

Stage 1 – Informal Discussion

Where possible, concerns should first be raised directly with the appropriate member of staff.

For parents and carers, this will usually be:

- the class teacher;
- workshop leader; or
- session leader.

For staff members, concerns should normally be discussed with their line manager. Where appropriate, an Incident Report or Record of Concern will be completed for monitoring purposes.

Many concerns can be resolved quickly through open discussion without the need for further action.

If it is not appropriate to discuss the matter with the member of staff involved, or if the concern remains unresolved, please proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Contact Head Office

If the concern cannot be resolved informally, or you do not feel comfortable raising it with the member of staff involved, please contact Fresh Arts Head Office.

Telephone: 0203 904 1113

A member of the management team will:

- listen to your concerns;
- record the details;
- acknowledge the complaint;
- begin initial enquiries; and
- seek an appropriate resolution.

Where possible, concerns raised at this stage will be resolved within **10 working days**.

Stage 3 – Formal Written Complaint

If you remain dissatisfied, you may submit a formal written complaint.

Please send your complaint to:

Fresh Arts Programmes Manager

Email: admin@fresharts.co

Please include:

- your name and contact details;
- the nature of your complaint;
- relevant dates, times and locations;
- the names of any individuals involved (where known);
- details of any previous discussions; and
- the outcome you are seeking.

Fresh Arts will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within **three working days**.

Stage 4 – Investigation

The Programmes Manager, or another appropriate member of senior management, will carry out an impartial investigation.

This may include:

- speaking with those involved;
- reviewing incident reports;
- considering relevant documentation;
- reviewing policies and procedures; and
- obtaining witness statements where appropriate.

A written response will normally be provided within **10 working days** of acknowledgement. If additional time is required due to the complexity of the investigation, you will be informed of the reason and provided with an updated timescale.

Stage 5 – Review Meeting

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, you may request a formal review meeting.

The meeting will normally include:

- the Programmes Manager;
- a member of the Senior Management Team; and
- the complainant.

Children should be accompanied by a parent or carer.

Parents and carers may bring a friend, relative or representative for support.

Staff members may be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative where appropriate.

A written record of the meeting will be produced and shared with all attendees.

Stage 6 – Final Decision

Following the review meeting and any additional enquiries, Fresh Arts will issue a final written decision.

The response will include:

- the findings of the investigation;
- whether the complaint has been upheld in full, in part or not upheld;
- any actions Fresh Arts intends to take; and
- the reasons for the decision.

This represents the conclusion of Fresh Arts' internal complaints procedure.

8. External Advice

- 8.1 The law encourages workers to make an internal disclosure as the primary method of whistleblowing, however, the school fully recognises that staff may wish to seek advice and support from their trade union before deciding to make a whistleblowing complaint.
- 8.2 In certain circumstances it may be appropriate to raise concerns outside of Fresh Arts to the appropriate 'prescribed regulator'. It is recommended that this only done after a Worker has attempted to address concerns directly with Fresh Arts and through the whistleblowing policy.
- 8.3 The concern raised must be in the genuine interest of the public and the individual must also believe the information to be substantially true, i.e. more than just suspicion. The Worker is advised to discuss his/her concerns with a legal advisor or trade union before taking the step of reporting concerns outside of the school.

9. Concerns raised by Children

- 9.1 Fresh Arts works hard to ensure that children know how to seek help if they are worried about anyone's behaviour or conduct towards them. The child protection policy, for dealing with allegations against other children and disciplinary policy for allegations against staff should be referred to when dealing with safeguarding concerns .
- 9.2 If an allegation about a member of staff or volunteer is related to the safety or wellbeing of a child the Fresh Art's child protection policy should be referred to and the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) will be contacted if necessary.
- 9.3 The Department For Education "Keeping Children Safe in Education" documentation includes guidance on safeguarding of children in education. The document can be found via the link below:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

10. Monitoring and Review

- 10.1 Fresh Arts will maintain a log of all reported whistleblowing and review this policy at least every year. The management team are responsible for formally adopting this policy. The Director should ensure that the policy is consequently implemented and all workers are aware of how to access the policy.
- 10.2 Fresh Arts will maintain a log of all reported allegations and review the policy every 2 years or in line with any legislative changes, whichever comes first.

Date of Last Review	Name of Person Reviewing	Amendments Made
03/08/2026	Essie Laugharne	None <i>Essie Laugharne</i>