



**BLACKBURN
CATHEDRAL**

Blackburn Cathedral Whistleblowing Policy

1. About this policy

1.1 Blackburn Cathedral is committed to conducting its operations with honesty and integrity and we expect all staff to maintain high standards. Any suspected wrong-doing should be reported as soon as possible.

1.2 This policy covers all clergy, employees, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, casual workers and agency workers (collectively 'relevant individuals').

The policy is in place to safeguard the interests of relevant individuals when they act as alerters regarding any neglect or abuse, whether that be mental, physical, emotional, sexual, racial/ethnic or financial, of service users or any similar abuse of colleagues. Partner organisations are expected to operate to comparable standards.

1.3 Blackburn Cathedral accepts that it is bound by legislation in the Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998) and guarantees that procedures will be invoked in ways which do not prejudice the whistle-blowers' own position and prospects.

1.4 This policy does not form part of any employees' contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

1.5 Blackburn Cathedral is committed to ensuring that all relevant individuals:

- Have knowledge and understanding of protection procedures;
- Are committed to emphasising that harassment is unacceptable;
- Are enabled to identify oppressive abuse when it occurs;
- Are informed regarding their individual duty to act to protect service users;
- Are made aware of measures to safeguard their interests if they act as whistle-blowers;
- Are made aware of their rights under the Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998).

2. What is whistleblowing?

2.1 Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to our activities. You may have several legitimate reasons for whistleblowing. These include, but are not limited to:

- Preventing the problem getting worse.

- Preventing the problem affecting more people.
- Reducing the risks to others and protect them from harm.
- Preventing becoming implicated in the bad practice.

2.2 We are aware that some may fear the consequences of speaking out. To protect people we adopt the standards and approach set out in the Public Disclosure Act (1998) which seeks to protect the disclosure of:

- A criminal offence or failure to meet a legal obligation.
- Endangering health and safety.
- Risk of environmental damage.
- Someone deliberately concealing this activity.

2.3 If you have a personal concern or complaint which is not in the wider public interest such as the way you have been treated at work, this should be raised in accordance with our grievance policy as appropriate.

2.4 If you are uncertain whether something is within the scope of this policy you should seek advice from the whistleblowing officer, whose contact details are at the end of this policy.

3. How to raise a concern about issues, including safeguarding

3.1 To fulfil our commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults, we are required to have appropriate whistleblowing procedures, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults to be addressed.

3.2 If a child or adult is at immediate risk you should contact the Cathedral Safeguarding Adviser on 07800 740001 or the Police on 999, or one of the other named contacts in accordance with Blackburn Cathedral's Safeguarding Policy. In an emergency, call emergency services on 999.

3.3 Otherwise, we hope that in many cases you will be able to raise any concerns with the person to whom you are responsible. However, where you prefer not to raise it with that person for any reason, you should contact the COO, or if the issue concerns the COO, you should contact the Dean. Contact details are at the end of this policy.

3.4 We will arrange a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You may bring a friend,

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colleague or union representative to any meetings under this policy. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

4. Confidentiality and responsibility

4.1 We hope that staff will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. However, you can make disclosures anonymously. If you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity confidential and only reveal it where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern.

4.2 As a whistleblower, you will not be expected to prove the truth of your concern. The action we can take as an organisation will depend on how far we can assert the credibility of the concern.

5. Investigation

5.1 We will thoroughly investigate your concern. If it relates to a safeguarding issue we will give it the utmost priority. We will involve statutory or partner agencies where needed. If it relates to safeguarding children or adults then our Cathedral Safeguarding Adviser will lead the investigation.

5.2 We will aim to keep you informed of the progress of the investigation and its likely timescale. However, sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent us giving you specific details of the investigation or action taken as a result. You should treat any information about the investigation as confidential.

5.3 We will not take action against a whistleblower if their concern proves unfounded but they raise it in good faith. We will treat malicious allegations very seriously.

6. Protection and support for whistle-blowers

6.1 We aim to encourage openness and will support whistleblowers who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken. Blackburn Cathedral encourages all relevant individuals to regard it as their duty to the Cathedral to raise legitimate concerns

about suspected misconduct by colleagues, managers, or those with whom they work.

6.2 Whistleblowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a genuine concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the whistleblowing officer immediately.

6.3 You must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. If you are involved in such conduct you may be subject to disciplinary action.

6.4 However, if we conclude that a whistleblower has made false allegations maliciously or with a view to personal gain, the whistleblower may be subject to disciplinary action.

6.5 Public Concern at Work operates a confidential helpline. Their contact details are set out at the end of this policy.

7. Contacts

Whistleblowing Officer

Ian White : Chief Operating Officer
coo@blackburncathedral.co.uk
Tel: 01254 845303

Diocesan Safeguarding Officer

Catherine Smith
catherine.smith@blackburn.anglican.org
Tel: 07711 485170
or: 01254 503088 during office hours

Public Concern at Work

(Independent Whistleblowing Charity)
Helpline: 0207 404 6609
whistle@pcaw.co.uk
www.pcaw.co.uk
Suite 306, 16 Baldwins Gardens, London, EC1N 7RJ