

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

WHISTLEBLOWING IN EARLY YEARS SETTINGS

'Whistleblowing' refers to the reporting of wrongdoing or other concerns in one's place of work, most often to news outlets or government authorities. While such a practice is generally in the service of the common good and holding institutions accountable, it comes with a number of risks. This guide provides expert advice on what to do or consider, if you ever find yourself needing to make a report.

1

UNDERSTAND WHAT WHISTLEBLOWING IS



Whistleblowing means reporting unsafe, illegal, or unethical practices. It's about protecting children and ensuring a safe, transparent environment. Familiarise yourself with what qualifies for whistleblowing, especially safeguarding concerns.

2


KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



As a whistle-blower, you are legally protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA). This protection allows you to report concerns without fear of retaliation. Your role in safeguarding children and staff is essential.

3

IDENTIFY THE TYPES OF CONCERNS



Concerns that qualify for whistleblowing include criminal activities, health and safety risks, safeguarding issues, and breaches of regulations. Personal grievances generally don't qualify unless they impact the public interest.

4

KNOW THE REPORTING CHANNELS



Ensure you know who to report to: within your setting, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) — externally Ofsted, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), or the police.

5

CONFIDENTIALITY IS KEY



Most settings offer confidential or even anonymous reporting options. If you're uncomfortable disclosing your identity, consider these options, but remember it may limit the ability to thoroughly investigate.

6

FOLLOW THE ESCALATION PROCESS



If your initial report isn't addressed, escalate it within the organisation. If necessary, escalate outside the organisation to ensure concerns are properly managed and safety is maintained.

7

DOCUMENT EVERYTHING



Keep a detailed record of each step of your whistleblowing process. Include dates, times, and summaries of conversations. These records are essential if further action is required.

8


REGULARLY REVIEW POLICIES



Policies should be reviewed at least annually, after guidance reviews and after significant incidents. Staying updated with the latest guidance ensures everyone in the setting understands procedures for raising concerns.

9

SEEK ADVICE WHEN NEEDED



Services like ACAS, PIDA and Citizens' Advice Bureau offer free advice on whistleblowing and employment rights. Use these resources if you need support navigating the process.

10

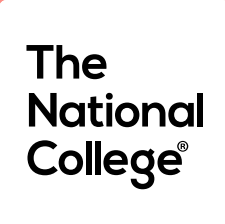
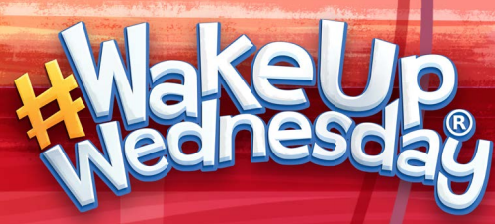
FOSTER AN OPEN CULTURE



An open, transparent culture reduces the need for whistleblowing. Encourage honest conversations around safeguarding and support a team environment where concerns are proactively addressed.

Meet Our Expert

Kim Martin's consultancy work spans more than 15 years of leadership, inspecting, auditing, coaching and training. She is qualified to provide certified training and is experienced in creating bespoke CPD training and workshops. Kim places safeguarding and mental health and wellbeing at the forefront of every leadership mandate.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/whistleblowing-for-educators>