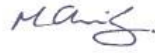




Official Policy



Safeguarding in Education Whistle Blowing Guidance (Child Protection / Safeguarding)

Author:	Mr M Crofts / Mrs C Tomes	
Date ratified:	Autumn 2025	
Governor Committee:	Full Governing Body Committee	
Approved by:	Mr M Ainley Chair of Governors	Signature: 
Review due:	Autumn 2026	

Hard copies of all policies are available free of charge, upon request. Please contact the school office to order copies.

Phone: (01964) 613133

Email: whstc@wscampus.net

Web: www.withernseahigh.org.uk



Withernsea High School
Whistle Blowing (Child Protection / Safeguarding)
Guidance Revised September 2025

This policy should be read in conjunction with;

- ERYC Whistle Blowing Policy (Schools) revised (Sept 2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE (Sept 2025)
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (May 2022)
- School Code of Conduct (Sept 2025)
- Use of reasonable force advice for Headteachers, staff and Governing Bodies DfE July 2013

The ERYC general Whistle Blowing Policy (Schools) outlines the full scope and application of the policy in its widest sense including in cases of suspected, for example, fraud, theft and money laundering. In respect of safeguarding the policy states that in the case of concerns that there has been a:

‘Failure to observe’, or breach of, procedures and guidelines issued by the East Riding Safeguarding Children’s Partnership with the risk that children may suffer harm. Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on relevant partners, persons or bodies working with children to co-operate with a view to improving the well-being of children in the area of the local authority. It is this duty that supports early intervention to safeguard and promote children’s and young people’s wellbeing in order that good outcomes can be delivered.’

If you have concerns regarding abuse to adults or children, you may also contact the Safeguarding Children teams.

If there is an immediate risk call 999 for emergency services or 101 for local police.

A. Background

- It is the clear responsibility of all members of staff and volunteers to act on any concerns or information that gives them concern about the safety and wellbeing of a child or children arising from circumstances or events out of school.
- Equally it is the responsibility of all members of staff and volunteers to act on any concerns or information that gives them concern about the safety and wellbeing of a child or children within the school or within the care of the school.
- Such a concern in a whistle blowing context may be related to;
 - The conduct or behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer towards an individual child or children.
 - Information that suggests a member of staff or volunteer is unsuitable to work with children.
 - Belief that the Designated Safeguarding Lead, senior managers or Governors have failed to take appropriate action in response to safeguarding concerns raised.

This policy aims to:

- Encourage individuals to report suspected concerns and wrongdoing as soon as possible in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and that their confidentiality will be respected.

- Let all staff know how to raise concerns about potential wrongdoing.
- Set clear procedures for how the school will respond to such concerns.
- Assure staff that they will not be victimised for raising a legitimate concern.

B. How to Raise a Concern.

- 1) As outlined in the school **Child Protection and Safeguarding policy** and **Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025** concerns should be raised within school with either the Designated Safeguarding Lead or, in the case of allegations or concerns about the conduct of staff, with the headteacher. (Unless the allegation is about the headteacher in which case the Chair of Governors or Local Authority Designated Officer).

C. How the school will respond.

- 1) If the concern is that a member of staff or volunteer has or may have;
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he / she would pose a risk of harm to children.
 - Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The Headteacher (or other as above) will contact the LADO following ERSCP guidance and Keeping Children Safe in Education Sec 4 (Sept 2025) to discuss how the allegation should be investigated.

If after consultation it is agreed that the above criteria may apply the appropriate Statutory Guidance will be followed.

- 2) If the concern does not match any of these criteria or, after consideration with the LADO or other appropriate agencies, it is agreed that the matter should be dealt with by internal processes the school will consult the Human Resources Department to determine the most appropriate action in line with appropriate policies and the ERYC Whistle Blowing policy procedures.
- 3) If the concern is that the school has not followed appropriate Child Protection procedures or has not pressed other agencies where concerns about a child persists, the DSL should be approached by the member of staff to seek assurances that appropriate action will be taken.

D. If in either case the member still has concerns that a child or children are at risk or that appropriate procedures have not been followed the member of staff should contact the LADO or the Early Help, Advice and Safeguarding Hub or, in situations where children are thought to be in immediate danger or risk of harm, the police by contacting 999.

E. Confidentiality and Support

- 1) All concerns will be treated in strictest confidence by all concerned. The school will protect the identity of whistle blowers as much as possible.
- 2) However particularly in the context of Child Protection and Safeguarding concerns it may be that an investigation process may reveal the source of the information.

- 3) All staff involved in any related investigations must maintain confidentiality during and after the conclusion.
- 4) The school will take steps to minimise any difficulties and provide appropriate support and advice to staff passing on concerns.
- 5) Depending on the nature of the concerns and the subsequent type of investigation the Whistle Blower will be updated appropriately in line with the ERYC policy.
- 6) All involved will attempt to ensure that any allegation is dealt with fairly, quickly, proportionately and consistently in a way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is subject to the allegation and the person bringing the concern to the attention of the school.

F. Related Policies / Guidance and Contacts

ERYC –Whistle Blowing Policy (Schools) revised August 2024	WHS Safeguarding Whistle Blowing Guidance – Sept 2025.docx
Keeping Children Safe in Education Sec 4 DfE Sept 2024	KCSiESeptember 2025.pdf
School Staff Code of Conduct Sept 2024	WHS Staff Code of Conduct - Sept 2025.docx
Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings 2024	WHS Child Protection Procedures Staff Reference Guidance - Sept 2025.docx
School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Sept 2024	WHS Safeguarding and CP Policy – Sept2025.docx
Chair of Governors	Matthew Ainley
Local Authority Designated Officer Jayne Hammill and Lisa Breene	LADO@eastriding.gov.uk
Safeguarding and Partnership Hub (SaPH)	01482-395500 safeguardingchildrenshub@eastriding.gov.uk
ER Emergency Duty Team – (out of hours)	01482 393939 emergency.duty.team@eastriding.gcsx.gov.uk
Safeguarding In Education Team	safeguardingineducation@eastriding.gov.uk Chris Hamling (Education Safeguarding Manager) Tahnee Burgess (Education Safeguarding Officer) Fiona O Hara (Education Safeguarding Officer) Tara Baker (Education Safeguarding Officer) Kate Jordan (Education Safeguarding Officer) Eve Atkinson (Education Safeguarding Support Assistant)

HARM THRESHOLD AND LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS

Harm Threshold

Harm Threshold involves managing cases of allegations that might indicate a person will pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in a school or college. It involves behaviour where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or a college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Low-level concern

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and
- Does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children.
- Having favourites.
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy.
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- Humiliating pupils.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.