



DATE PALM
PRIMARY

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WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

DATE PALM STATEMENT of INTENT

At Date Palm our vision is for the School to ensure our pupils grow like a Date Palm tree – with **strong foundations, lofty branches and produce fresh fruit:**

- ✓ To build **Strong Foundations for Character Development** that:
Instil values; inspire each pupil; display best manners.
- ✓ To have **Lofty Branches of Educational Excellence** that will:
Provide a broad and varied range of experiences and learning opportunities;
help each pupil progress and develop in all aspects; support their skills and talents.
- ✓ To produce **Fresh Fruit that provides services to their Communities** in order to:
Become responsible and confident citizens; make a positive difference;
commit to charitable endeavours; become effective contributors towards
Britain's future.

Reviewed by	Position	Signature
Sharifa Khatun	Head Teacher	<i>S Khatun</i>
Afsana Khanam	Deputy Head / DSL	<i>A Khanam</i>
Sabina Yesmin	Safeguarding Governor	<i>S Yesmin</i>

Reviewed: September 2022

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Whistling blowing policy

Introduction

Whistleblowing is the reporting of a concern that something is happening within Date Palm Primary that should not be, or not happening that should be, which may include wrongdoing, or relate to the way in which the organisation is run. Wrongdoing includes misconduct on all levels, from minor to serious acts.

Date Palm Primary is committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity and accountability. To achieve this Date Palm Primary encourages the raising of concerns and for individuals to speak out against wrongdoing. A culture where individuals feel confident in being able to raise concerns is one where the highest standards of performance can be achieved.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 puts whistleblowing on a statutory basis and gives protection against victimisation or dismissal for workers who blow the whistle on criminal behaviour or other wrongdoing (as defined in the Act).

General Principles

- Date Palm Primary recognises that raising a concern may be a daunting and difficult experience and therefore, Date Palm Primary will ensure that advice and support is provided.
- Date Palm Primary maintains that an individual raising a concern in 'good faith' is acting responsibly and appropriately; this is true even if the concern turns out to be a misunderstanding or otherwise groundless.
- Concerns will be treated in confidence in as far as this is possible and Date Palm Primary will make every effort to protect the anonymity of the person raising a concern, if requested. In circumstances where this may not be possible, the individual will be contacted to discuss the available options and offered support.
- All concerns raised under this policy will be taken seriously and investigated.
- If wrongdoing is discovered as a result of an investigation, the Disciplinary procedure will apply, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
- Victimisation of any individual raising a concern, or attempts to prevent such concerns from being raised, will not be tolerated and is in itself a disciplinary offence.
- When statements are made maliciously, action under the Disciplinary procedure may be taken against members of staff or Managing Conduct procedure for volunteers.

- The application of this procedure will be monitored corporately. An annual record of matters raised and the outcomes of investigations will be maintained in a form which does not endanger or compromise confidentiality.

Who Can Use This Policy?

Concerns can be raised by:

- Agency workers
- Carers
- Individuals on vocational/work experience and secondment schemes
- Members of staff
- Service users e.g. children, young people, and other service users
- Students
- Volunteers

Members of staff who become aware of a concern from a child or young person that has not been raised as a complaint, or by any other procedure, may use this policy to voice the concern. In doing so this ensures that any issues are not lost and the appropriate action is taken.

Aims and Scope of Policy

The aim of this policy is to encourage individuals to raise concerns about any wrongdoing that they know about, or suspect is happening in the organisation. The policy sets out the way in which concerns can be raised and how these concerns will be dealt with.

The policy does not:

- Replace the Grievance, Collective Grievance or Harassment Procedures.
- Replace the Disciplinary procedure, although whistleblowing concerns could lead to use of the Disciplinary procedure.
- Provide another means to reconsider any matters which have already been addressed under Date Palm Primary other procedures e.g. Harassment, Grievance or Disciplinary.

What type of incident or behaviour is covered?

The types of concerns raised under the Whistleblowing policy should be about something that is or may be:

- misconduct involving a child
- performance/conduct that puts at risk the safety of children
- performance/conduct that seriously affects the quality of service provision

- performance/conduct which puts at risk Date Palm Primary reputation as a provider of Children's Services
- inappropriate conduct or unethical behaviour
- performance or conduct that gives cause for concern
- negligent conduct or performance
- witnessing harassment or bullying of others
- abuse or misuse of Date Palm Primary property (includes computer systems, computer software/hardware, email and the internet)
- a criminal offence
- poor or dangerous employment practice
- fraud/financial irregularity
- a breach of a legal obligation
- a miscarriage of justice
- danger to health and safety
- damage being caused to the environment (e.g. by pollution)
- a deliberate attempt to cover up information tending to show any of the above

The above list is not intended to be exclusive or exhaustive and any matters raised will be considered seriously.

How to raise a concern

Concerns raised under this policy must be made:

- in accordance with the procedure set out below
- in 'good faith', and
- in the belief that the concern is reasonable, or is substantially true

Confidentiality

All concerns will be treated in confidence in as far as this is possible and Date Palm Primary will do its best to protect the identity of the person raising a concern, if he/she does not want their name to be disclosed. If this is not possible (e.g. where it is not possible to continue criminal or civil proceedings or a disciplinary investigation) the person raising the concern will be contacted to discuss the matter and offered full and continuing support.

Anonymity

There may be occasions when individuals only feel comfortable in raising a concern anonymously and Date Palm Primary will always take such concerns seriously. However, concerns that are raised anonymously do make an investigation difficult. In addition, it can

also be difficult to make a judgement about the extent to which the matter has been raised in 'good faith'. In light of this, there may be instances where Date Palm Primary, having seriously considered the concern and taken all the information available into account, might not be able to pursue anonymous concerns.

Therefore, this policy encourages individuals to disclose their identity to those who need to know it; as this ensures a thorough investigation and that the matter is dealt with appropriately. It also enables feedback to be provided. Individuals, who wish to discuss the implications of this further, should refer to Appendix B, and in addition, section 7 for sources of support and advice.

Procedure

Who to inform

As a first step, individuals should normally raise concerns with the Head teacher. Concerns can be raised either orally or in writing. Individuals, who feel unsure about raising a concern because they don't know if it is relevant or whether it falls within this policy, are encouraged to come forward so that the matter can be discussed and advice given. Individuals, who feel unable to approach the Head teacher or feel that it is inappropriate in the circumstances, should raise their concern with someone that they trust within the organisation.

Whistle blowing the Head should be made to the chair of the Governors at governors@datepalmprimary.com telephone number can be obtained from the office.

How Date Palm Primary will respond

The concern will be referred to the Head teacher, in accordance with the reporting requirements outlined in 'Guidance on Responding to Whistleblowing Concerns'. This should be someone acceptable to the individual raising the concern.

The Head teacher receiving the concern will write to the individual who has raised the concern within 5 working days of receipt, informing them of the following:

- that the concern has been received
- whether any initial enquiries have been made
- how the matter will be investigated
- an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response
- a point of contact for support during an investigation and information on the sources of support and advice available

What happens during an investigation?

In the first instance, consideration will be given as to whether temporary alternative working arrangements are needed during the investigation to minimise any distress. The investigator will then meet with the individual who has raised the concern to find out all the facts and clarify any details. The investigator may want to review the concern by asking



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questions about the culture and processes of the service/section in which the concern has been raised.

An investigation will also involve meeting with the individual that the concern has been brought against (if applicable) and any witnesses.

All allegations made against staff must be reported to the LADO.

The right to be accompanied at meetings will apply to both parties. A companion may be a UNISON/other trade union representative, or another Date Palm Primary colleague (they may not be accompanied by anyone who is a practising lawyer).

Throughout the investigation both parties will be kept informed of progress, including any difficulties in completing the process within the timescale given.

What happens after an investigation?

Once the investigation is complete, the Head teacher will meet separately with the person that has raised the concern and with whom the concern has been brought against, to feed back the outcome and whether any further action will be taken.

The Head teacher will check to ensure that any identified actions are taken and that there is no victimisation of any parties involved. Individuals, who feel that their concern has not been handled effectively, should write to the Head teacher's line manager (Chair of Governor) explaining why, within 10 working days of receiving the outcome.

These Procedures should be read in conjunction with: LSCB Procedures for managing allegations of abuse against staff working in children's, school and family settings.

Support and Advice

Various sources of support and advice are available as follows:

- **UNISON/Trade Union representative**
UNISON branch line: 0800 0 857 857
- **Tower Hamlets Local Authority Designated Officer(LADO)**
Melanie Benzie for allegations against professionals, staff or volunteers.
020 7364 0677
07903 238827
LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk
- **Public Concern at Work**, this is an independent authority offering free advice to people concerned about danger or misconduct in the workplace but who are unsure whether to or how to raise the matter. This service can be accessed by calling 020 3117 2520, or by email: whistle@protect-advice.org.uk



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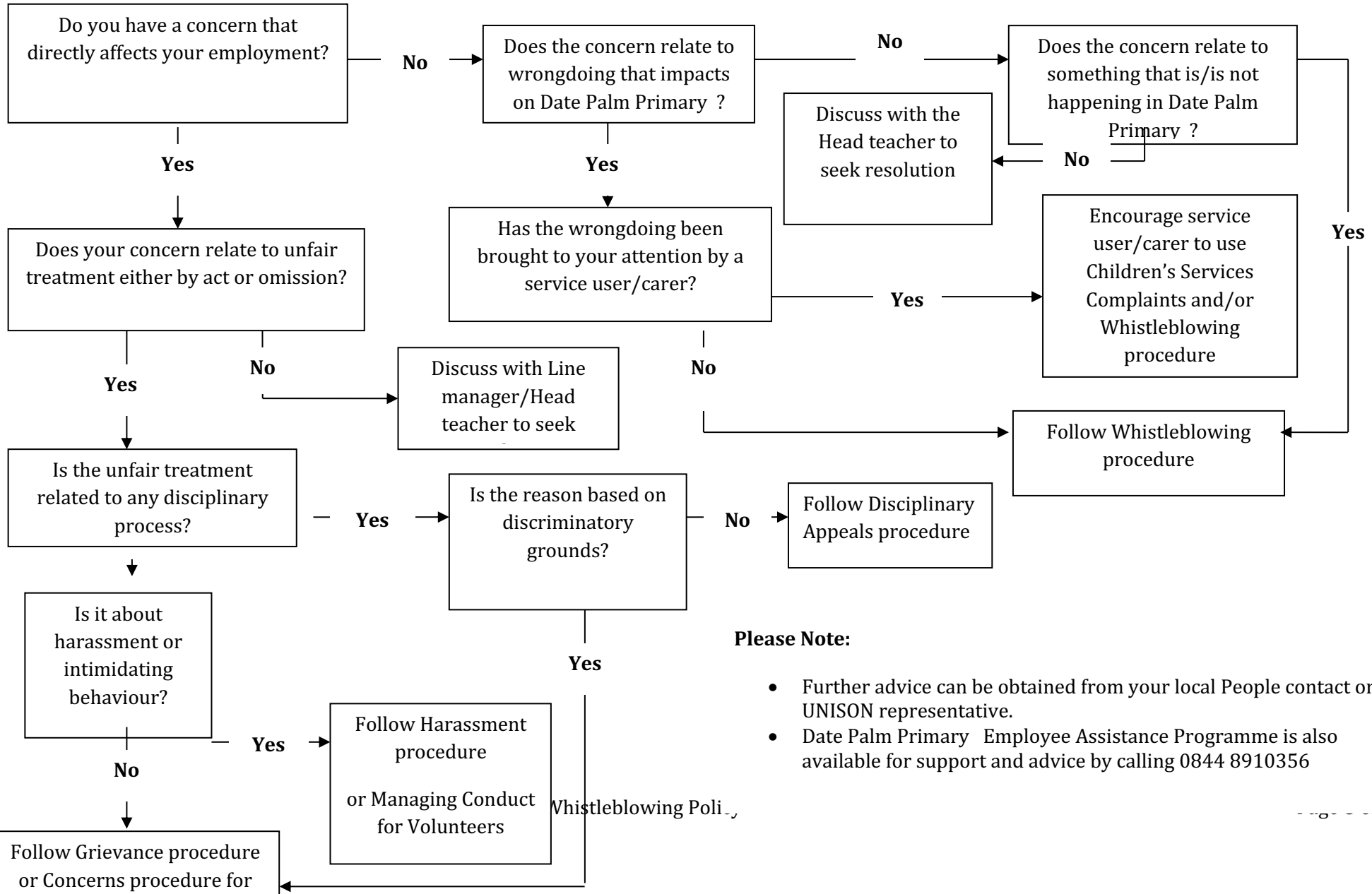
- [Ofsted Whistleblower Hotline](#) gives information including when to use Ofsted's Whistleblowing procedure. Date Palm Primary's own procedure should be used unless individual circumstances make this unsafe. Please also refer to [Ofsted's Whistleblowing policy](#) which gives guidance if the information concerned a different regulator or another of the four nations.
- By Post

Ofsted
National Business Unit
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Telephone – 0300 123 3155



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APPENDIX A - WHICH PROCEDURE TO USE



Please Note:

- Further advice can be obtained from your local People contact or UNISON representative.
- Date Palm Primary Employee Assistance Programme is also available for support and advice by calling 0844 8910356



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