

Whistleblowing Procedure

Reporting illegal or improper conduct or concerns about safeguarding children or young people

1. WHAT IS THE AIM OF THIS POLICY?

- 1.1. This policy applies to all staff including Trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers or anyone working on behalf of Angels Support Group. All of the above will be referred to as “employees” throughout the remainder of this policy.
- 1.2. This policy is designed to enable employees to notify the Relevant person (but see 4.1) of any reasonable suspicion of illegal or improper conduct. Where the concerns are about safeguarding children and young people, or Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, the charity’s Designated Safeguarding Lead, Leise Cooper should be notified (see 7 below).
- 1.3. It is a procedure in which the Relevant person will be expected to act swiftly and constructively in the investigation of any concerns in accordance with the charity’s disciplinary procedure.
- 1.4. Concern about a colleague’s professional capability should not be dealt with using this procedure (but see section 7 below).
- 1.5. It is important that any criminal behaviour or other wrongdoing by an employee, or any individual undertaking work with the organisation is reported and properly dealt with.
- 1.6. This Whistleblowing policy is underpinned by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (known as the Whistleblowers Act). This gives legal protection to employees against being dismissed or penalised by their employers as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. The organisation is committed to ensuring that no member of staff should feel at a disadvantage in raising legitimate concerns.
- 1.7. No employee who uses this procedure in good faith will be penalised for doing so. The charity will not tolerate harassment and/or victimisation of any employee raising concerns.

1.8. Employees must act in good faith and must have reasonable grounds for believing the information to be accurate.

2. WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

2.1. This procedure is intended to cover concerns which are in the public interest and may at least initially be investigated separately but might then lead to other procedures e.g. disciplinary. These concerns could include (see also Section 6):

- Financial malpractice, impropriety or fraud
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or Statutes
- Dangers to Health & Safety or the environment
- Criminal activity
- Improper conduct or unethical behaviour
- Attempts to conceal any of these

2.2. This procedure is not designed to replace or be used as an alternative to the grievance procedure, which should be used where an employee is only aggrieved about his/her own situation.

2.3. Employees who are worried about wrongdoing at work do not necessarily have a personal grievance.

2.4. Charity Commission regulations require any employee who suspects fraud, corruption, misuse of charity funds or other financial irregularity to ensure this is reported to the Charity Commission for possible investigation. Normally you must first report any suspicion of such an irregularity to the Treasurer (but see 4.1), as it is the Trustees who have a duty to report this to the Charities Commission. If you are concerned that the matter has not been addressed appropriately then you are required to report it to the Charity Commission.

2.5. An employee who is not sure whether the conduct he/she is concerned about does constitute illegal or improper conduct or is unsure about how to proceed can contact any of the names listed in section 8 for advice.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

3.1. The organisation will treat all such disclosures in a confidential and sensitive manner. The identity of the employee making the allegation may

be kept confidential so long as it does not hinder or frustrate any investigation. However, the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and the individual making the disclosure may need to provide a statement as part of the evidence required.

4. MECHANISM FOR RAISING CONCERNS

- 4.1. If an employee has a concern, they should first raise it with their line manager, verbally or in writing. If they feel that this person may be involved or do not wish to approach them, then they should approach the charity's Chair.
- 4.2. If the employee feels the Chair may be involved, the employee should report the matter to the charity's Secretary.
- 4.3. Charities Commission regulations require any employee who suspects fraud, corruption, misuse of charity funds or other financial irregularity to ensure this is reported to the Charities Commission for possible investigation. Normally you must first report any suspicion of such an irregularity to the Treasurer, who would report to the Charities Commission if necessary. If you are concerned that the matter has not been addressed appropriately then you are required to report it to the Charities Commission. For further information about what, when and how to report to the Charities Commission please see their website at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>
- 4.4. Depending on the nature of the concern the complainant will be asked to justify and support their claim. Normally the complainant will be asked to do this in writing. It will, therefore, be helpful to note down any facts and dates about anything they are concerned about as they happen, or as soon after as possible, so that there is a record if they wish to go on and raise it as a concern..
- 4.5. Employees who want to use the procedure but feel uneasy about it may wish to bring a friend along to any discussions, so long as the third party is independent of the issue.
- 4.6. Where anonymity is requested, efforts will be made to meet the request where appropriate but that might not always be possible. The earlier and more open the expression of concern, the easier it will be to take appropriate action.

4.7. Each case will be investigated thoroughly by the appropriate person as decided by the person to whom the complaint is made with the aim of informing the complainant of the outcome of any investigation as quickly as possible.

4.8. The outcome of any investigation will determine what will happen next. This could include following the Angels Disciplinary and Grievance Policy, or informing the Charity Commission or the Police where appropriate.

5. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IF AN ISSUE IS RAISED WITH A MEMBER OF STAFF?

5.1. If a member of staff or trustee (other than the Chair) is approached by a colleague on a matter of concern as defined in this document, he/she should be advised to follow the procedure set out in section 4.

6. EXAMPLES OF ILLEGAL AND/OR IMPROPER CONDUCT

- Fraudulent or improper use of the charity's money or assets
- Dangerous practices at work
- Corruptly receiving any gift or advantage
- Allowing private interests to override the interests of the charity.
- Other behaviour or practice that is in breach of the Angels Code of Conduct

The Charities Commission ask that only issues that could cause serious harm to:

- the people a charity helps
- the charity's staff or volunteers
- services the charity provides
- the charity's assets
- the charity's reputation

are reported to them.

7. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

7.1. All employees and volunteers have a duty to report concerns about the safety and welfare of children and young people, and Vulnerable Adults, as per Angels' policies for Safeguarding Children and Young People and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults. The policies are available at all times on Angels website.



AUTISM & ADHD SUPPORT

for parents/carers of children with
ADHD and/or on the Autistic Spectrum

7.2. Concerns about any of the types of abuse listed in the appendices of the Safeguarding Children and Young People and Safeguarding Adults policies should be reported to the charity's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSP):

Leise Cooper, contact details:
phone 07815 458355
email leise@angelssupportgroup.org.uk

7.3. The reason for the concern may be the actions of a colleague (including a more senior colleague), a trustee, a volunteer, another child/young person or parent, or someone outside the charity. Whatever the reason, concerns must be reported.



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8. NAMES TO CONTACT (see 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3)

Parent Support Manager	Leise Cooper	Tel: 07815 458355
Finance Manager	Raine Simcox	Tel: 01462 685150
Angels Support Group Chair:	Louise Slater	Email: chair@angelssupportgroup.org.uk
Angels Support Group Secretary	Hilary Forrester	Email: secretary@angelssupportgroup.org.uk
Angels Support Group Treasurer	John Skeeles	Email: Treasurer@angelssupportgroup.org.uk
Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding Children & Young People, and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults (DSP)	Leise Cooper	Tel: 07815 458355

The following organisations all provide advice to employees about when it is appropriate to report concerns.

Charity Commission Tel: 0845 300 0218

Website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

The Charity Commission has produced a publication about what issues an employee should report and how to go about it. This information can be found at www.gov.uk/guidance/report-serious-wrongdoing-at-a-charity-as-a-worker-or-volunteer

Public Concern at Work Tel: 02031172520

Email: whistle@pcaw.co.uk

This organisation provide free confidential advice to workers who have concerns about wrong-doing in the workplace.

Approval and review schedule


This policy and procedures applies to Angels Support Group and covers any activities we run as a group. We are committed to reviewing our policy and procedures on a regular basis and when there are significant changes in legislation or to our organisation.

Angels Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures was adopted as follows:



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Date of Angels Support Group Strategy meeting: 10th February 2020

Signature of the Chair:  C.L. SLATER

Date Signed: 10th February 2020

Signature of Trustees: Rowena Christie 10/02/20
A. Carpenter 10/02/20

Frequency policy to be reviewed: Bi - Annually

Date policy to be reviewed: February 2022

History of changes

Version	Date	Summary of changes
V 1	October 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Policy largely rewritten to bring up to date in line with current legislation and other Angels policies.