Cambridge & Ely
Child Contact Centre

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHILD CONTACT CENTRES

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Registered Charity Number: 1145344
Company Registration Number: 7464402

Whistleblowing Policy

Volunteers, coordinator, and managers are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within their setting. However, they may not express their growing concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances, it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may be just suspicion of malpractice and wrongdoing at work.

Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity, and accountability. In line with this commitment, we encourage volunteers, coordinators and managers and others with genuine concerns about any person linked with the setting and/or others (e.g., families) to come forward and voice those concerns.

This policy document makes it clear that volunteers, coordinators, managers, families, and others can do so without fear of reprisals or victimisation. The Whistleblowing Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees paid or unpaid and others to raise such concerns within Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre rather than overlooking the problem.

The procedure allows volunteers, coordinators, managers, families, and outside agencies to raise concerns about the volunteers/coordinators/management of Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre or as an organisation in genera such as procedures and policies.Aims and scope of this policy

This policy aims to:

- Provide avenues for you to raise genuine concerns and receive feedback on any action taken.
- Allow you to take the matter further if you are dissatisfied with the outcome or response.
- Reassure you that steps will be taken to protect you from reprisals or victimisation for Whistleblowing in good faith.

There are existing procedures in place to enable you to lodge a grievance relating to volunteers's own employment, families concerns or complaints, and issues raised by outside agencies. This Whistleblowing policy is intended to cover genuine concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures. That concern may be about something that:

- Is against the policies and procedures of Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre.
- Falls below established standards of practice.
- Amounts to improper conduct.

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- Is a Health and Safety risk, including risks to the public as well as children, other colleagues, Parents/Carers, and others.
- Contradicts Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centres Code of Conduct.
- Contributes to a safeguarding risk involving children in the care of Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre.

The procedure will be communicated to all volunteers, coordinators, and managers as well as families and others.

Harassment or Victimisation

Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre recognise that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal. Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith. However, should you feel that you have suffered harassment, either directly or indirectly because of raising a concern, you should refer to the Employees Handbook (volunteers, coordinators, and managers), or Complaints Policy (families).

This does not mean that if you are already the subject of disciplinary or redundancy procedures, that those procedures will be halted because of your Whistleblowing. This applies to families using the centre.

Confidentiality

Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre will do its best to protect your identity when you raise a concern. However, it must be appreciated that, in the interests of natural justice, any investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by you may be required as part of the evidence.

Anonymous Allegations

You are strongly encouraged to put your name to any allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful. Anonymous allegations will be considered, and any action taken at the discretion of Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre and in conjunction with the relevant agencies where appropriate.

In exercising this discretion, the following factors will be considered when considering how to deal with any allegations:

- The seriousness of the issues raised.
- The credibility of the allegation.
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

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Malicious or vexatious allegations – Stagg, coordinators, and managers

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you make a malicious or vexatious allegation, disciplinary action may be taken against you in accordance with the Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre Procedures.

How to raise a concern (for employees paid or unpaid)

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with the Centre Co-ordinator or the team leader on duty. This depends, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who you think may be involved in the malpractice. For example, if you believe that the Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre Co-ordinator or Team Leader is involved, you should approach the Chair of the Management Committee.

If you feel the Chair of Management Committee may be involved, you should approach any member of the Management Committee. If this is not possible you should raise your concerns with the Chief Executive of NACCC.

With specific regard to Safeguarding issues, that may involve a member of volunteers, you should initially consult with the Co-ordinator. If you suspect, they or management may be related to the issue you should contact the NACCC Service Development Manager for advice. You can also contact your local authority Children's Services Referrals Department for advice and assistance. Contact details are available at the end of this policy.

Concerns are better raised in writing. You are advised to set out background and history of your concerns, giving names, dates, and places, where possible, and the reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation. The earlier you express your concern, the easier it is for The Child Contact Centre, NACCC or your local authority Children's Services Safeguarding Team to act.

Although you are not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, you will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are sufficient grounds for initial enquiries to be made.

Response from the Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre

The action taken by the child contact centre will depend on the nature of the concern. The matters raised may:

- Be investigated internally.
- Be referred to the Police.

Allegations referred directly to the NACCC, or Children's Services will be dealt with in accordance with their policies and procedures. Any person who is the subject of an allegation should, at the appropriate times be given details of the allegation to respond.

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To protect individuals, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. Concerns or allegations that fall within the scope of specific procedures (e.g., Safeguarding or discrimination issues) will normally be referred for consideration under those procedures.

Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for an investigation. The following process will be followed in the event of complaints:

Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre will ensure that a letter is sent to confirm the receipt of the complaint.

The complaint will then be fully investigated and within 7 calendar days of when the complaint was first received. Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre endeavour to investigate all complaints in a non-discriminatory manner.

A letter will be sent detailing how Cambridge & Ely Child Contact Centre has dealt with the complaint.

To Escalate

If the complaint has not been dealt with in a manner which is satisfactory to the volunteers, coordinator, manager, family, or others involved, then they can contact NACCC directly as follows:

Telephone: 0115 947 4557

contact@naccc.org.uk

www.naccc.org.uk

The local authority Children's Services Duty Team contact:

https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/children-s-social-care/safeguarding-children-and-child-protection.

Implementation

Reviewed by		
Name Bridget Giltinane	Signature: B.Giltinane	Date: 11.09.26
This Policy will be reviewed no less than once every three years.		