**Additional Guidance for OOSS**

**Safeguarding & Practice Review - Self Assessment**

(information correct as of January 2020)

This guidance supplements the Safeguarding & Practice Review - Self Assessment checklist and has been created to support settings to understand the requirements for running an out-of-school setting. Its purpose is to also encourage implementing good practice measures to develop and maintain a robust safeguarding model.

The format of this document follows the order of the Safeguarding & Practice Review - Self Assessment checklist and the DfE Voluntary Safeguarding Code of Practice December 2018 (draft) (DfE VS CoP).

It is the responsibility of each setting to ensure that they are adhering to the most recent information.

**Contents**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Health & Safety**  Further information can be found on pages 8-11 of DfE VS CoP | |
| Health & Safety policy | **2** |
| Fire Safety policy | **2** |
| Fire & Evacuation plan | **3** |
| Site Risk Assessment | **3** |
| First Aid policy | **3** |
| Employers Liability Insurance | **3** |
| Professional Indemnity Insurance | **4** |
| Public Liability Insurance | **4** |
| Buildings Insurance | **4** |
| Other areas you may want to consider - Accident & Incident Procedures; Procedure for Offsite visits; Electrical Equipment Testing | **5** |
|  |  |
| **Safeguarding**  Further information can be found on pages 12-21 of DfE VS CoP | |
| Child Protection policy | **6-7** |
| Behaviour Management policy | **8** |
| Online Filtering System | **8** |
| Other areas you may want to consider – Early Help; CASS | **9** |
|  |  |
| **Staff Suitability**  Further information can be found on pages 22-28 of DfE VS CoP | |
| Staff Behaviour policy | **10** |
| Other areas you may want to consider – Safer Recruitment | **11** |
|  |  |
| **Governance**  Further information can be found on pages 29-30 of DfE VS CoP | |
| Complaints policy | **12** |
| Whistleblowing policy | **12** |
| Other areas you may want to consider – Equalities & Diversity policy | **13** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Health & Safety** |  |
| Health & Safety Policy | Site Risk Assessment | Professional Indemnity Insurance |
| Fire Safety Policy | First Aid Policy  (possibly included in H&S policy) | Public Liability Insurance |
| Fire & Evacuation Plan | Employers Liability Insurance | Buildings Insurance |

**Health & Safety policy**

The business must have a health and safety policy if you have 5 or more employees, and if you have fewer than five employees, you don’t have to write anything down.

Most businesses set out their policy in three sections:

* The statement of general policy on health and safety at work sets out your commitment to managing health and safety effectively, and what you want to achieve
* The responsibility section sets out who is responsible for specific actions
* The arrangements section contains the detail of what you are going to do in practice to achieve the aims set out in your statement of health and safety policy

Recommendations are to review the policy annually or if there are:

*Changes to health and safety regulations  
Changes to your business (Source: hse.gov.uk)*

**Fire Safety policy**

The main fire legislation in the UK is The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 - (RRFSO). The Order places duties on ‘responsible persons’, to the extent which they have control, over premises and activities to: - Ensure compliance with relevant legislation

* Ensure suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments are carried out
* Implement protective and preventative measures as required to ensure the safety of all ‘relevant persons’
* Appoint competent person/s to assist him/her in implementing the measures as required

You’re responsible for fire safety in business or other non-domestic premises if you’re:

* an employer
* the owner
* the landlord
* an occupier
* anyone else with control of the premises, for example a facilities manager, building manager, managing agent or risk assessor

If there’s more than one responsible person, you have to work together to meet your responsibilities. The Fire Safety Order also applies if you have paying guests, for example if you run a bed and breakfast, guesthouse or let a self-catering property. You must keep a written record of your fire risk assessment if your business has 5 or more people.

You should review your risk assessment:

* if it is no longer valid or if there has been a significant change in the workplace

Your workplace will change over time. You are likely to bring in new equipment, substances and procedures. There may be advances in technology. You may have an accident or a case of ill health. You should review your assessment if any of these events happen.

The assessment should be reviewed at this point, however there is no set frequency for carrying out a review.

**Fire & Evacuation Plan**

A fire emergency evacuation plan *(FEEP)* isa written document which includes the action to be taken by all staff in the event of fire and the arrangements for calling the fire brigade. It can include any relevant information in relation to the FEEP.

General Fire Notice

For small premises this could take the form of a simple fire action sign posted in positions where staff and relevant persons can read it and become familiar with its contents.

Staff Fire Notice

High fire risks or large premises will need more detailed emergency evacuation plan which takes account of the findings of the [fire risk assessment](https://www.firesafe.org.uk/fire-risk-assessment/), e.g. the staff significantly at risk and their location. In addition, notices giving clear and concise instructions of the routine to be followed in case of fire should be prominently displayed. *(Source: firesafe.org.uk)*

**Site Risk Assessment -** *See Fire Safety Policy*

**First Aid policy**  
The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 require employers to provide adequate and appropriate equipment, facilities and personnel to ensure their employees receive immediate attention if they are injured or taken ill at work. These Regulations apply to all workplaces including those with less than five employees and to the self-employed.

What is ‘adequate and appropriate’ will depend on the circumstances in the workplace. This includes whether trained first-aiders are needed, what should be included in a first-aid box and if a first-aid room is required. Employers should carry out an assessment of first-aid needs to determine what to provide.

The Regulations do not place a legal duty on employers to make first-aid provision for non-employees such as the public or children in schools.   
  
The minimum first-aid provision on any work site is:

* a suitably stocked first-aid kit;
* an appointed person to take charge of first-aid arrangements;
* information for employees about first-aid arrangements.

[*http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg214.pdf*](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg214.pdf) *(Source: hse.gov.uk)*

**Employer’s Liability Insurance**

You must get Employers’ Liability (EL) insurance as soon as you become an employer - your policy must cover you for at least £5 million and come from an authorized insurer. It is mandatory for most businesses. EL insurance will help you pay compensation if an employee is injured or becomes ill because of the work they do for you.  
  
You can be fined £2,500 every day you are not properly insured. You can also be fined £1,000 if you do not display your EL certificate or refuse to make it available to inspectors when they ask.  
  
Employer’s Liability Insurance usually isn’t required if:

* A limited company where only one person is employed and that person also owns more than 50% of the share capital
* A company which is not limited and has only one employee (a sole trader) who is the principal of the business
* Partnerships where the directors are equal partners in the business and do not employ others
* Many public organisations, health services, and government bodies
* You may also not require it if:
* A company where all employees are direct family members
* Unpaid student workers, volunteers
* Work experience school children
* People in a training programme who you don’t employ *(Source: gov.uk and moneysupermarket.com)*

**Professional Indemnity Insurance**

Many small businesses take out professional indemnity insurance if you provide professional service advice, or handle client data and intellectual property. So, if your business does any of this, you could be open to allegations ranging from breach of copyright, to accusations of defamation. It will be an idea to get this insurance if:

•   You provide advice and consultancy  
Clients can claim compensation if there’s a mistake in the advice you’ve given.

•   You provide an expert service  
In case you make a mistake in designs, plans or calculations.

•   You handle people’s information  
You could face claims if you accidentally disclose data or infringe on a client’s legal rights.

•   A client insists you have it  
Many clients will require that you have professional indemnity insurance in place before you can start working for them.

•   Your professional body requires it  
You might belong to a professional body or industry association where professional indemnity insurance is compulsory. *(Source: AXA Insurance)*

**Public Liability Insurance**It is not mandatory for businesses to hold [public liability insurance](https://www.hiscox.co.uk/business-insurance/public-liability-insurance); however, it may be worth considering if your business involves frequent interaction with the public, contractors or clients. This kind of cover will protect your business if someone makes a claim against you for bodily injury or damage to their property, either on your premises or as a result of your work. It is not mandatory to display the certificate however may help build trust with prospective clients

**Buildings Insurance**

Buildings insurance is an insurance policy that covers the financial cost of repairing damage to the physical structure of a property in the event of damage or theft. This includes the roof, floors and walls, as well as any fitted or permanent fixtures (i.e. a fitted kitchen).

The cause of the damage is important. A typical policy will cover the holder from damage which is out of their control, and may include (without being limited to) the following:

* Flooding;
* Fires and arson;
* Explosions;
* Malicious damage and vandalism;
* Storm damage, and that from falling trees.

There are often limits to what kinds of damage is included in your insurance policy, so it’s worth checking the details thoroughly before taking out a policy.

Buildings Insurance isn’t required by law if you own a property, it will usually be required by your mortgage lender if you are purchasing a property. If you own a leasehold property (a common arrangement for flats) then buildings insurance may be a requirement of the lease, although it’s often arranged by the freeholder. ***(Source: Hiscox)***

Other areas you may want to consider-

Accident & Incident Procedures

Reporting and recording are legal requirements. The report tells the enforcing authorities for occupational health and safety (HSE and local authorities) about serious incidents and cases of disease. This means they can identify where and how risks arise and whether they need to be investigated.

It also allows HSE and local authorities to target their work and provide advice on how to avoid work-related deaths, injuries, ill health and accidental loss.

Information on accidents, incidents and ill health can be used as an aid to risk assessment, helping to develop solutions to potential risks. Records also help to prevent injuries and ill health, and control costs from accidental loss.

You must keep a record of:

* any reportable death, injury, occupational disease or dangerous occurrence
* all work-related injuries that result in a worker being away from work or unable to do their full range of normal duties for more than **three** consecutive days (not counting the day of the accident but including any weekends or other rest days)

*(Source: hse.gov.uk)*

Procedure for Offsite visits  
Please see the follow link for information on educational visits

*(Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits)*

Electrical Equipment Testing

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 require that any electrical equipment that has the potential to cause injury is maintained in a safe condition. However, the Regulations do not specify what needs to be done, by whom or how frequently (ie they don't make inspection or testing of electrical appliances a legal requirement, nor do they make it a legal requirement to undertake this annually).

PAT testing is not compulsory. The law simply requires an employer to ensure that their electrical equipment is maintained in order to prevent danger. It does not say how this should be done or how often. Employers should take a risk-based approach, considering the type of equipment and what it is being used for. If it is used regularly and moved a lot e.g. a floor cleaner or a kettle, testing (along with visual checks) can be an important part of an effective maintenance regime giving employers confidence that they are doing what is necessary to help them meet their legal duties. *(Source: hse.gov.uk)*

Parental Consent/Emergency contact detailsGoverning bodies and proprietors should put in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, and to help prevent the risk of them going missing in future. • Where reasonably possible, schools and colleges should hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil or student. This goes beyond the legal minimum and is good practice to give the school or college additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

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|  | **Safeguarding** |  |
| Child Protection Policy | Behaviour Management Policy | Online Filtering System |

**Child Protection policy**A safeguarding or child protection policy statement makes it clear what your organisation or group will do to keep children safe.

It should set out:

* your organisation's commitment to protecting all children
* the more detailed policies and procedures your organisation will put in place to keep children safe and respond to child protection concerns.

### Purpose and aim of the policy statement: Identify the organisation, its purpose and function. Set out the organisation's overarching commitment to keeping children safe.

### Scope of the policy statement

Be clear about who the policy applies to. It should cover all children under 18 but are all adults expected to comply with it? Should it just be staff and volunteers who work directly with children? What about those who have occasional contact with children such as a caretaker?

### Context

Briefly state the main legislation and guidance that supports the policy statement. Explain how this policy statement links to more detailed child protection policies and procedures.

### Policy statement

Set out your organisation's beliefs about the importance of child protection.

* For example, "we believe everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them".
* Include a statement about equality and a commitment to anti-discriminatory practice. For example "we will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation".
* Make sure your policy statement recognises the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, for example with communication or the impact of discrimination.

Explain how, in broad terms, the organisation will meet your commitment to keeping children safe. For example by:

* listening to children and respecting them
* [appointing a nominated child protection lead](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/templates/role-description-child-protection-lead/) and a [member of the trustee board](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/charity-trustees/) who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding at the highest level in the organisation
* writing detailed safeguarding and child protection procedures
* making sure all staff and volunteers understand and follow the safeguarding and child protection procedures
* ensuring children, young people and their families know about the organisation's safeguarding and child protection policies and what to do if they have a concern
* building a safeguarding culture where staff, volunteers and children know how they are expected to behave and feel comfortable about sharing concerns.

### Supporting documents

You need a set of more detailed policies and procedures which explain the steps adults within your organisation must take to keep children safe. Your policy statement should include a list of these.

### Contact details

Include the names and contact details of the people responsible for safeguarding and child protection in your organisation. Include the contact details for the [NSPCC Helpline](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/our-services/nspcc-helpline/) and [Childline](https://www.childline.org.uk/) so that people know they can contact us if they need child protection support and advice.

### Dates

Provide the date the policy statement comes into force. It's important to keep the statement up to date so you should include and a review dates and make sure the review happens on time.

### Signature

Your policy statement should be signed and dated by the most senior person in your organisation who has responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

### Next steps after completing your safeguarding policy statement

When you have completed your overarching safeguarding and child protection policy statement, you need to ensure that all adults and children are aware of, understand and can access your safeguarding policies.

You should consider:

* how you will tell everyone about new or updated policies and any challenges that might arise
* how to ensure your policy is accessible to people with communication difficulties or different language needs.

*(Source:* [*https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/writing-a-safeguarding-policy-statement/#heading-top*](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/writing-a-safeguarding-policy-statement/#heading-top)*)*

As a provider you should have a clear and effective child protection policy in place that sets out how you will protect the children that are in your care. As a minimum, the policy should:

• Be reviewed and updated at least annually;

• Be available at the venue for parents and carers, and on your website if you have one;

• Be clear that any safeguarding concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately

• Be clear on the providers approach to peer on peer abuse. Including: steps they take to prevent it happening; how allegations will be recorded, and reported appropriately; how a victim will be supported and a clear statement that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”;

• Include a commitment to treat everyone fairly and with respect. This includes a commitment that under no circumstances should any staff member or volunteer inflict physical or psychological harm to a child. Assault of children is against the law. If any adult causes physical or psychological injury to a child, or mistreats a child, they could be prosecuted for committing a criminal offence; and

• Reflect local safeguarding arrangements

*(Source: Vol’ Safeguarding CoP – Draft 2018, pg12)*

The child protection policy should include:

* A definition of Safeguarding and Child Protection
* A statement that Child protection forms part of the settings Safeguarding responsibilities
* A list of relevant polices and how these policies link together, for example: behaviour, confidentiality, anti-bullying, safer recruitment, physical intervention.
* Settings may wish to have a separate policy about working to prevent and respond to racialisation and extremism.
* A statement of the purpose of the policy and who it applies to.
* A statement linking the policy to the LSCB procedures.
* A statement of principles and values.
* Statutory framework (Acts & Legislation)
* Name and contact details of safeguarding lead
* Dealing with disclosures
* Confidentiality
* Record keeping
* Parents
* Appendix

Management and update of the policy:

At the start of the policy it is important to identify:

* Name of person responsible for the child protection policy.
* Name of the member of the governing body with responsibility for safeguarding.
* Date when the policy was last reviewed/revised.
* Date of the next review of the policy.

## *(Source: NSPCC Child Protection Examples)*

**Behaviour Management policy**Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils.  
Although not compulsory in OOSS having such policy will ensure consistency and best practice when contributing to the overall learning environment for the pupils.

It is vital that the behaviour policy is clear, that it is well understood by staff, parents and pupils, and that it is consistently applied. In developing the behaviour policy, the headteacher should reflect on the following ten key aspects of school practice that, when effective, contribute to improving the quality of pupil behaviour:

1) A consistent approach to behaviour management;   
2) Strong school leadership;   
3) Classroom management;   
4) Rewards and sanctions;   
5) Behaviour strategies and the teaching of good behaviour;   
6) Staff development and support;   
7) Pupil support systems;   
8) Liaison with parents and other agencies;   
9) Managing pupil transition; and   
10) Organisation and facilities.

The school’s behaviour policy should set out the disciplinary action that will be taken against pupils who are found to have made malicious accusations against school staff.

The behaviour policy should acknowledge the school’s legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, in respect of safeguarding and in respect of pupils with special educational needs (SEN).

*(Source:*[*https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/488034/Behaviour\_and\_Discipline\_in\_Schools\_-\_A\_guide\_for\_headteachers\_and\_School\_Staff.pdf*](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/488034/Behaviour_and_Discipline_in_Schools_-_A_guide_for_headteachers_and_School_Staff.pdf) *)*

**Online Filtering policy**

The Department for Education’s statutory guidance ‘[Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2)’ obliges schools and colleges in England to “ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place. Children should not be able to access harmful or inappropriate material from the school or colleges IT system” however, schools will need to “be careful that “over blocking” does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.”

Recognising that no filter can guarantee to be 100% effective, schools should be satisfied that their filtering system manages the following content (and web search):

* Discrimination: Promotes the unjust or prejudicial treatment of people on the grounds of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010
* Drugs/Substance abuse: displays or promotes the illegal use of drugs or substances
* Extremism: promotes terrorism and terrorist ideologies, violence or intolerance
* Malware / Hacking: promotes the compromising of systems including anonymous browsing and other filter bypass tools as well as sites hosting malicious content
* Pornography: displays sexual acts or explicit images
* Piracy and copyright theft: includes illegal provision of copyrighted material
* Self-Harm: promotes or displays deliberate self-harm (including suicide and eating disorders)
* Violence: Displays or promotes the use of physical force intended to hurt or kill

This list should not be considered exhaustive and providers will be able to demonstrate how their system manages this content and many other aspects

Regarding the retention of logfile (Internet history), schools should be clear about the data retention policy of their provider.

Providers should be clear how their system does not over block access, so it does not lead to unreasonable restrictions.

***(Source: saferinternet.org.uk)***

Other areas you may want to consider-

Early Help

Early Help means taking action to support a child, young person or their family early in the life of a problem, as soon as it emerges. It can be required at any stage in a child’s life from pre-birth to adulthood,and applies to any problem or need that the family cannot deal with or meet on their own. It also applies to all children and young people, with any form of need.

Early Help requires that agencies should work together as soon as a problem emerges or a need is identified to ensure the child gets the right response, and the right services, from the right people at the right time. Our aim is to meet need early and avoid a problem escalating or the need increasing.

Early Help is provided to prevent or reduce the need for specialist interventions unless they are absolutely the correct response to meet the need and resolve the problem.

Early Help can be provided in the most complex of circumstances as well as the simplest. Early help means responding promptly if a child is at immediate risk of harm (or has other significant or complex needs) as much as it means responding to a need which only requires advice or guidance.  (Source: lscpbirmingham.org)

CASS

The Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS) is the way citizens and professionals in Birmingham access support, advice, information, report a concern about a child and contact their allocated Social Worker.   
  
CASS offers early support from a range of partners and a wide range of services.  
Ring 0121 303 1888 for:

* Information for families
* School admissions and pupil placements
* Discussing concerns for a child or family and receive Early Help advice on thresholds and pathways
* Support from the Early Help Support Team
* Support to complete an Early Help Assessment
* Booking onto your local Early Help Panel
* Family Support and Think Family
* Accessing MASH to report/discuss your safeguarding concern for a child.  MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) is a multi-agency team which co-locates key safeguarding agencies including professionals from social care, police, health and education to better identify risks and improve decision making, interventions, and outcomes.

(Source: lscpbirmingham.org)

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| **Staff Suitability** | |
| Staff Behaviour Policy |  |

## Staff Behaviour policy This policy outlines expectations regarding employees’ behaviour towards their colleagues, supervisors and overall organization. The components of the policy may include:

#### Compliance with law

All employees must protect the company’s legality. They should comply with all environmental, safety and fair dealing laws. Expect employees to be ethical and responsible when dealing with company finances, products, partnerships and public image.

#### Respect in the workplace

All employees should respect their colleagues. No tolerance of any kind of discriminatory behavior, [harassment](https://resources.workable.com/workplace-harassment-company-policy) or victimization. Employees should conform with the [equal opportunity policy](https://resources.workable.com/equal-opportunity-company-policy) in all aspects of their work, from recruitment and performance evaluation to interpersonal relations.

#### Protection of Company Property

All employees should treat the company’s property, whether material or intangible, with respect and care.

Employees:

* Shouldn’t misuse **company equipment** or use it frivolously.
* Should respect all kinds of **incorporeal property**. This includes trademarks, copyright and other property (information, reports etc.) Employees should use them only to complete their job duties.

Employees should protect company facilities and other material property (e.g. [company cars](https://resources.workable.com/company-car-policy)) from damage and vandalism, whenever possible.

#### Professionalism: All employees must show [integrity](https://resources.workable.com/tutorial/employee-integrity-tests) and professionalism in the workplace

**Personal appearance:** All employees must [follow the dress code](https://resources.workable.com/dress-code-company-policy) and personal appearance guidelines if applicable.

**Gifts: Employees should be discouraged** from accepting gifts from clients or partners. Bribery is to be prohibited.

All employees should fulfill their job duties with integrity and respect toward customers, stakeholders and the community. Supervisors and managers mustn’t abuse their authority. Duties should be delegated to their team members taking into account their competences and workload. Likewise, team members should follow team leaders’ instructions and complete their duties with skill and in a timely manner.

**Absenteeism and tardiness:** Employees should follow their schedules. Punctuality is vital and informing the line manager in a timely manner if the employee will be absent from work and the reason why.

**Conflict of interest:** Employees should avoid any personal, financial or other interests that might hinder their capability or willingness to perform their job duties.

[**Policies**](https://resources.workable.com/company-policies)**:** All employees should read and follow our company policies. If they have any questions, they should ask their managers or Human Resources (HR) department.

The organization may have to take disciplinary action against employees who repeatedly or intentionally fails to follow the code of conduct. Disciplinary actions will vary depending on the violation.

Possible consequences may include:

* Demotion
* Reprimand
* Suspension or [termination](https://resources.workable.com/separation-of-employment-company-policy) for more serious offenses
* Detraction of benefits for a definite or indefinite time

This should shape the policies around Gross misconduct and Disciplinary action.

*(Source:* [*https://resources.workable.com/employee-code-of-conduct-company-policy*](https://resources.workable.com/employee-code-of-conduct-company-policy)*)*

‘It is also good practice to have a staff behaviour policy in place. This should, amongst other things, include:

• Acceptable use of technologies;

• Staff and volunteer / child relationships and communications, including the use of social media; and

• Staff and volunteer / parent relationships and communications, including the use of social media.‘

(Source: DfE Voluntary Safeguarding CoP pg 27)

Other areas you may want to consider - Safer Recruitment Info

Safer Recruitment

For an 11-page document regarding Safer Recruitment, please click the following link from the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership

*http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/schools-briefings?highlight=WyJzYWZlciIsInJlY3J1aXRtZW50Iiwic2FmZXIgcmVjcnVpdG1lbnQiXQ==*

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| **Governance** | |
| Complaints Policy | Whistleblowing Policy |

**Complaints policy**An effective complaints procedure should include the following:  
  
Accessibility: It should be easy for the complainant to find out how and where to complain. Make details available on your website, incorporate literature, and make sure staff know how to advise clients about how to make a complaint.

Simplicity: Keep your system straightforward – there should be as few steps as possible, and the complaint should be dealt with quickly and efficiently.

Time scales: There should be clearly defined time scales built into the procedure that allow for proper investigation and response. Generally, complaints should be resolved within 30 days.

Acknowledgement: A simple letter acknowledging receipt of the complaint, an indication of who will deal with it, and the time it is expected to take should be included.

Independence: You should be able to provide for the investigation of any complaint by someone who is not directly involved. If the client is not satisfied, they should be able to pursue the complaint up through management. If you have a governing body or association, you should provide their details as well.

Confidentiality: Every complaint should be treated in confidence as far as possible. Remember that an OH complaint will inevitably fall within the Data Protection Act 1998 remit of personal sensitive information.

Recording complaintsA record of complaints provides a quality control mechanism for customer service and management review and ensures that all complaints can be tracked.

A simple spreadsheet noting the following is useful:

* The date the complaint was made
* A brief description of the complaint
* Response details for the complainant
* Actions taken to resolve the complaint
* Who dealt with the complaint
* The date that the complainant was advised of the outcome.

All staff should be properly trained in dealing with complaints and understand the complaints procedure. Review this procedure regularly. Ensure that complaint handling forms part of the induction process, training and performance review of staff.

*(Source:* [*https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/how-to-implement-a-written-complaints-procedures/*](https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/how-to-implement-a-written-complaints-procedures/)*)*

**Whistleblowing Policy**  
'Whistleblowing' means the reporting by employees of suspected misconduct, illegal acts or failure to act. The aim of this Policy is to encourage employees and others who have serious concerns about any aspect of work to come forward and voice those concerns.  
  
You’re protected by law if you report any of the following:

* a criminal offence, for example fraud
* someone’s health and safety is in danger
* risk or actual damage to the environment
* a miscarriage of justice
* the company is breaking the law, for example does not have the right insurance
* you believe someone is covering up wrongdoing

Personal grievances (for example bullying, harassment, discrimination) are not covered by whistleblowing law, unless your particular case is in the public interest.

Report these under your [employer’s grievance policy](https://www.gov.uk/solve-workplace-dispute). All concerns should be treated confidentially and although not ideal as it offers less protection for an employee’s position, concerns may be able to be expressed anonymously but it will be at the organization’s discretion if they take it further or not. If any concerns are expressed to the media you can lose your whistleblowing rights.

Concerns can be raised in person, telephone or writing initially to your line manager however can be escalated depending on the seriousness of the concern. The policy should also outline what will happen with the complaint, who will investigate it and an acknowledgment and timeframe should be provided.

*(Source: https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing)*

Other areas you may want to consider -

Equality & Diversity PolicyAn equality and diversity policy is simply a written agreement for your group about how you will avoid discriminating against people, and how you will create a safe and inclusive atmosphere for your members and service users.  
  
Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity, equality and respect for all. Any acts of unlawful or unfair discrimination (including harassment) committed against an employee, contractor, job applicant or visitor because of a protected characteristic should not be tolerated. The protected characteristics are:

* sex; • gender reassignment; • marriage and civil partnership; • pregnancy and maternity;
* race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin); • disability;
* sexual orientation; • religion and or belief; and • age.

Templates for E&D policies are readily available online.

***(Source:*** [***https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-and-diversity-policy***](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-and-diversity-policy)***)***