

Whistleblowing Policy

Introduction

People who work within the Catholic Church in England and Wales (employees, office holders or volunteers) are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within the Church. However they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the Church. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances, it may feel easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice.

This whistleblowing policy is intended to encourage and enable anyone with a serious concern, to raise these concerns without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage.

The scope of this policy covers any workers making qualifying disclosures about safeguarding matters within CACS.

Defining Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is a term used to refer to the internal or external disclosure of malpractice as well as illegal acts or omissions, at work.

Policy Statement

CACS and all dioceses and religious congregations of the Catholic Church in England and Wales are committed to:

- Conducting themselves ethically, with honesty and integrity
- The highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability
- Good practice and high standards regardless of the individual's role within the Church
- Supporting employees, office holders and volunteers.

It is recognised that this might not always be achieved, and that genuine and serious concerns might need to be raised through this whistleblowing policy.

In line with these commitments, employees, office holders, volunteers and others who have serious concerns are encouraged to come forward and voice concerns about safeguarding practice. It is recognised that some cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis.

CACS and the dioceses and religious congregations of the Catholic Church recognise that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of repercussion from those responsible for the failure or malpractice. The Catholic Church will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect individuals when a concern is raised in good faith.

Policy prepared by the CACS Safeguarding Team.

