

## **Whistle-blowing Policy**

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1. Lincoln South Methodist Circuit (LSMC) operates a strict policy in relation to wrongdoing (which, for our staff, will be regarded as a disciplinary offence) and will not tolerate actions which may amount to a criminal offence or breaches of legal obligations, a miscarriage of justice, danger to health or safety or which may damage the environment (“wrongdoing”). All employees and volunteers are expected to maintain the highest of standards of integrity and good faith. Under Part IVA of the Employment Rights Act 1996 employees who report wrongdoings to certain parties are protected. However, it is our policy that any wrongdoing that has occurred should be reported to us. Accordingly, we have devised the following policy in order to encourage you to report any matters that you believe are of concern to LSMC and to reassure you that you will be protected in respect of any such disclosure.
2. You may be concerned about the repercussions to you in reporting matters that are of concern. We assure you that you will be protected and will not be subjected to any detriment because you have reported a matter that you believe in good faith to amount to wrongdoing or potential wrongdoing.
3. However, you must note that if you make any allegation which you do not believe or which is made maliciously or for some ulterior motive (i.e. a grudge against a fellow worker) then this may be treated as a disciplinary matter and we may invoke a disciplinary procedure where appropriate.

### **Reporting Wrongdoing**

1. In the first instance you may wish to raise the matter with your Minister on an informal basis and discuss with him, or her, what steps should be taken to report the matter to leadership.
2. You may at any time raise the matter formally with your Minister, whether orally or in writing and he or she will pass on the matter to LSMC’s Whistle-blowing Reporting Officer who is the Superintendent Minister.
3. If your concern is about your Minister or someone at a higher level of leadership, or you would prefer to deal directly with LSMC’s Whistle-blowing Reporting Officer, then you should raise the matter with the Senior Circuit Steward.
4. If your concern is about your Superintendent Minister or you would prefer not to deal directly with LSMC’s Whistle-blowing Reporting Officer, then you should raise the matter with the Senior Circuit Steward or speak to the District Safeguarding Officer.

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5. At all stages, all statements that you make will remain confidential unless you express a contrary wish or it becomes necessary to divulge such statements during the course of an investigation. For example, where a criminal offence is involved or if there are child protection or adult safeguarding issues. The person reporting a concern will be informed if that is the case.

### **Investigations**

1. You must recognise that a complaint about wrongdoing may require us to carry out an investigation into the allegations of wrongdoing. In these circumstances you will be informed before any of the matters that you have raised are put to the alleged wrongdoer and staff will be protected to ensure that their work environment is not affected by the disclosure.
2. You will be informed of the outcome of any investigation and what action has been taken.
3. If you have any concern or complaint about the manner in which you feel you are being treated because you made the disclosure, whether by the alleged wrongdoer or any co-employees or otherwise, you should raise this with whatever level of leadership you consider to be appropriate and this may be dealt with as a disciplinary matter in relation to such individuals.
4. If you are unhappy about the manner in which your disclosure was treated by the person to whom it was reported, or you consider that it has not been properly investigated then you should report the matter to whatever level of leadership or to whatever outside body you consider appropriate which may include the Charity Commission. You will not suffer any detriment by making such a report in good faith.

**At all times our intention will be to resolve the allegations that have been made and to ensure that wrongdoing has not occurred or, if it has occurred, that it is dealt with appropriately. However, we will not hesitate to report wrongdoing to the appropriate body if we consider that this is the correct approach to adopt in the circumstances.**

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