

Immanuel Church Chichester
WHISTLEBLOWING STATEMENT

About this Policy

We are committed to honesty and integrity in our church life and we expect all involved to maintain high standards. Any suspected wrongdoing, including “covering up”, should be reported as soon as possible.

This policy covers all ministers, officers, staff and volunteers, who are appointed by the board of Trustees and Leadership Team.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

What Is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to our activities. This includes bribery, fraud or other criminal activity, miscarriages of justice, health and safety risks, damage to the environment and any breach of legal or professional obligations, including abuse.

How to Raise a Concern

If a child or vulnerable adult is at immediate risk you should contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser on **01273 421 021** or the Police on 999 in accordance with the Chichester Diocese’s Safeguarding Policy. In an emergency, call emergency services on 999 and then the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser as soon as practicable. If you have received a direct allegation of abuse, but the child/adult is not in immediate danger you should contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) on **01273 421 021** without delay, and in all circumstances within 24 hours.

For staff and volunteers concerned about all other matters, we hope that in many cases you will be able to raise any concerns with the person to whom you are responsible. However, where you prefer not to raise it with that person for any reason, you should contact one of the Senior Leaders, the Chairman of Trustees, or the Senior Minister or Associate Minister; see contact details on the church website. (For those who are not staff or volunteers, it would usually be appropriate to contact one of the same group of people.) Where there is good reason for not contacting someone within the church, the next step would be getting in touch with the Archdeacon of Chichester (01273 425 799; webpage: <https://www.chichester.anglican.org/archdeacons/>).

What we will do: we will arrange a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You may bring a friend, colleague or union representative to any meetings under this policy. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

Confidentiality

We hope that whistleblowing concerns can be voiced openly under this policy. Completely anonymous disclosures are difficult to investigate. If you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret and only reveal it where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern.

External Disclosures

The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing associated with church activities. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. **Protect** (an independent whistle-blowing charity) operates a confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this statement.

Protection and Support for Whistleblowers

We aim to encourage openness and will support whistleblowers who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

If you have raised a safeguarding concern with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) then the DSA will usually liaise with the Senior Minister about your support.

Whistleblowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a genuine concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the one of the Senior Leaders **OR** the Chairman of Trustees **OR** one of the Ministers immediately. (If you are an employee and the matter is not remedied, you should raise it formally using our Grievance Procedure.)

For anyone else: you must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. If you are involved in such conduct you may be subject to disciplinary action. (In some cases the whistleblower could have a right to sue you personally for compensation in an employment tribunal.)

However, if we conclude that a whistleblower has made false allegations maliciously or with a view to personal gain, the whistleblower may be subject to disciplinary action.

Support:

Protect (an independent whistleblowing charity) operates a free and confidential helpline -
020 3117 2520 Website: www.pcaw.co.uk E-mail: whistle@protect-advice.org.uk

Statement adopted by the Board of Trustees on 26/2/2020

Adapted from Worcester Diocese template