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| Policy name: | Whistleblowing Policy |
| Author: | Ben Butcher, Head of Operations |
| Updated by: | |
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Purpose:

This policy explains how you can raise a concern about wrongdoing, illegal, or unethical practices within Magic Me. We are committed to fostering a culture where it is safe and acceptable for everyone to speak up. This procedure is here to help you raise a genuine concern ("whistleblow") and to ensure your concern is investigated properly and fairly.

Key documents:

This Whistleblowing Policy should be read in conjunction with the following Magic Me policies and procedures:

- [Safeguarding Children & Young People Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Safeguarding Adults Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Grievance Policy](#)

Values:

This policy is built on Magic Me's core values, which are applied as follows:

- Inclusivity: We are committed to an inclusive culture where every member of our community feels safe and empowered to raise a concern, knowing their voice will be heard and taken seriously, regardless of their role.



- Collaboration: This policy is a collaborative tool. It provides a way for you to work *with* the charity to identify and resolve serious issues.
- Thoughtfulness: We apply thoughtfulness by ensuring every concern is treated seriously, confidentially, and investigated fairly and appropriately.
- Creativity: A creative culture thrives on trust and psychological safety. This policy protects that safety, ensuring that our team can focus on creative, high-quality work, knowing that a clear and fair process exists to address malpractice.

Policy statement and legal framework:

Magic Me is committed to operating with the highest standards of honesty and accountability. We encourage all staff, volunteers, consultants, trainees, and clients to report any legitimate concerns they may have in confidence.

We offer full protection to anyone who raises a concern honestly and reasonably. This policy, and our commitment to you, is underpinned by UK law, primarily the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA). This Act gives legal protection to workers who raise legitimate concerns about wrongdoing.

We undertake to:

- Protect you from any victimisation, harassment, or bullying as a result of your disclosure.
- Ensure your career is not harmed or hindered in any way.
- Not initiate any disciplinary action against you for making the disclosure.

Any reprisal or retaliation against someone who has made a protected disclosure under this policy will be regarded as gross misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

We will also keep your identity confidential as far as is reasonably possible. If we are in a situation where your identity may need to be revealed (for example, in a criminal investigation), we will inform you of this at the earliest opportunity.

Policy:

This section explains what this policy covers and what it does not.

What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is when a member of our team (staff, volunteer, consultant, etc.) raises a concern about potential underhand or illegal practices within Magic Me or an associated organisation.

Who does this policy apply to?



This policy applies to all staff members, board members, volunteers, artists, freelancers, trainees, and clients.

What to report (qualifying disclosures)

We expect you to report any of the following concerns, which you believe to be in the public interest. You do not need to have absolute proof, but you must have reasonable grounds for your concern.

- A criminal offence (e.g., fraud, corruption, or theft).
- A failure to comply with any legal obligation.
- An act that endangers an individual's health and safety.
- Abuse, neglect, or poor practice relating to vulnerable people (a safeguarding concern).
- Damage to the environment.
- The deliberate concealment of information about any of the above.
- Any other serious act that could damage Magic Me or bring the charity into disrepute.

What this policy does *not* cover

This policy is not for personal complaints or grievances. If you have a concern about your own employment, contract, working relationships, or line management, you should use the Grievance Procedure.

Concerns about bullying or harassment are usually handled under our Grievance Policy. However, if you believe the issue is not just a personal dispute and is in the public interest (for example, it reveals a systemic failure, affects beneficiaries, or involves senior management), you should raise it under this Whistleblowing Policy.

Procedure:

Follow these steps to raise a concern.

Step 1: Raising a concern internally

In the first instance, you are encouraged to make your disclosure immediately to one of the following people:

- Your line manager (who will report it to the Executive Director);
- The Executive Director (or the Creative Director in their absence);
- The Chair of the Board of trustees (in the event that a concern relates to a director)

Important Note: For immediate dangers (especially to health and safety or safeguarding), you must notify the Executive Director immediately so that action can be taken to deal with the hazard.



Step 2: What to do if your concern involves senior management

If your concern is about the Executive Director or one of the directors, you should not report it to them. Instead, you should report it directly to the Chair of Trustees.

Email: chair@magicme.co.uk

Step 3: Our investigation

The Executive Director (or the Chair of Trustees, if appropriate) will investigate the concern, in conjunction with another senior manager or trustee as needed.

We may invite you to a meeting to discuss the concern. You are welcome to bring a work colleague, trade union representative, or friend to any meetings about your concern.

We will protect your identity as far as possible. If we need to share your identity for any reason, we will notify you.

If the concern is substantiated, appropriate action will be taken. We will inform you of the outcome where it is reasonably practicable to do so. In the event that the investigation takes some time we will ensure you are notified of this.

What if I'm not satisfied?

If you are unhappy with the outcome of the investigation, you can make a further report to the Executive Director or the Chair, who will review the matter.

Raising a Concern Externally (Prescribed Bodies)

We strongly encourage you to raise concerns internally first, as this gives us the fastest chance to investigate and fix the problem.

However, the law protects you if you raise your concern with an external "prescribed body." You might do this if:

- You have reasonable grounds to believe the trustees are involved in the wrongdoing.
- You have already reported it internally, but no action has been taken.
- The matter is exceptionally serious.

Key prescribed bodies for Magic Me include:

- The Charity Commission: For concerns about governance, risks to the charity, or failure to follow charity law.
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE): For risks to health and safety.
- The Police: For criminal offences.
- HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC): For concerns about financial or tax fraud.



Important cautions

- Failure to report: A failure to notify Magic Me of a serious concern listed in this policy (especially regarding safeguarding or health and safety) may be regarded as misconduct.
- Malicious allegations: If you deliberately make a false or malicious allegation, you will not be protected by this policy. This will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter and could result in dismissal.
- Discouraging others: Any attempt to discourage someone from raising a genuine concern may be treated as a disciplinary offence.

Independent advice

If you are unsure whether or how to raise a concern, or you are unhappy with the final outcome, you can contact Protect for independent and confidential advice.

- Charity: Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work)
- Advice Line: 020 3117 2520
- Website: protect-advice.org.uk

Continuous improvement of this policy:

The Executive Director is responsible for monitoring the use and effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the People Committee. When reviewed annually, the committee will discuss how the policy has functioned in practice and how it might be improved.