ELIZABETH HOUSE

Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust

Whistleblowing policy

Elizabeth House
2 Hurlock Street
London N5 1ED

Tel: 020 7690 1300
email: director@elizabeth-house.org.uk

Policy overview
Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust and Elizabeth House Community Centre (the charity) are committed to being open, honest and responsible. This policy explains how employees, sessional workers, volunteers, trustees and others associated with the charity can report serious concerns about things going wrong at the charity, particularly regarding the safety and welfare of vulnerable adults, young people, and children.

This is known as **whistleblowing** and means speaking up about possible misconduct, unsafe practices, or unethical behaviour without fear of being punished for doing the right thing.

Purpose
This policy is here to:

- Encourage everyone to report possible misconduct or safety issues.
- Ensure that any concerns are looked into fairly and confidentially.
- Protect those who report a concern from unfair treatment or retaliation.

This policy applies to everyone connected to the charity, including employees, volunteers, trustees and partner.

What is whistleblowing?
Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern about possible wrongdoing, such as:

- Safeguarding concerns.
- Discrimination, harassment, or abuse.
- Unsafe conditions that could put people at risk, and breaches of health and safety.
- Breaking the charity's rules or policies.
- Not following legal or regulatory requirements.
- Fraud, theft, or misuse of charity funds.
- Attempts to cover up wrongdoing.

Whistleblowing is for serious issues affecting others or the public interest. It is not for personal grievances which should be raised through our grievance process.

How to report a concern?

- **Who to contact**: If possible, report your concern to your manager. You can also speak to any other senior staff member or Nathalie Renaud, our **Whistleblowing Officer.**
- **Reporting anonymously**: If you are uncomfortable reporting your concerns to these contacts or you want to remain anonymous, you can contact Protect (details below).
- **How to contact**: Concerns can be shared in person, by phone, or in writing. If you choose to remain anonymous, this may limit how much we can investigate.
- **Details to include**: Provide as much information as possible, including the nature of the concern, the people involved, and any evidence.

Additional advice and support
If you are unsure about reporting or would like independent advice, you can contact:

- **Your trade union**
- **Protect**, a charity that offers free, confidential whistleblowing advice (0800 055 7214, https://protect-advice.org.uk)

- **The Charity Commission**: Guidance on reporting wrongdoing at a charity is available at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-serious-wrongdoing-at-a-charity-as-a-worker-or-volunteer
- **The police** if you are concerned about someone's safety or suspect criminal or terrorist activity.

What happens if you report a concern?
Once you report a concern, our Whistleblowing Officer will look into it to decide the best course of action, which may include an investigation. We promise to:

- Do all we can to identify and rectify wrongdoing at work.
- Ensure any investigation is fair and confidential.
- Keep you informed, as much as we can, about the progress and outcome.

Protection for whistleblowers
We are committed to protecting anyone who raises a concern in good faith.

- Reports will be treated confidentially, and we will protect your identity as much as possible.
- You will not face negative treatment, discrimination, or unfairness for raising a genuine concern. Anyone treating a whistleblower unfairly may face disciplinary action, including dismissal.
- No one will face retaliation for reporting a concern in good faith. Retaliation or intimidation against a whistleblower will lead to disciplinary action.

Review and support
The charity will provide support for individuals who report concerns and will review this policy regularly to ensure its effectiveness.

Raising concerns outside the charity
If your concern hasn't been resolved, or if it's a serious risk to public safety, you may contact The Charity Commission. Guidance on how to make a report is available at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-serious-wrongdoing-at-a-charity-as-a-worker-or-volunteer#how-the-charity-commission-can-help

Signed:

Nathalie Renaud
CEO, Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust

Reviewers:
Iqbal Ali, Deputy Centre Manager
Trustees

Policy Changes Tracking

Review date	Next review date
April 2026	April 2027