Whistleblowing Policy

**Introduction**

At Holy Trinity (HT) we affirm the Diocese of Ely’s Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure and fully adopt its policy as our own. Like the Diocese of Ely, HT is committed to the highest possible standards of integrity.

HT recognises that staff and volunteers are often the first to become aware of or identify serious concerns. This policy is in place to ensure that a process is available to encourage and enable all staff and volunteers to raise serious concerns in confidence and without fear of reprisals.

**Principles**

This policy is based on the following fundamental principles:

* All staff and volunteers have the right to raise concerns about perceived unacceptable practice or behaviour.
* All staff are responsible for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour, safeguarding concerns and any health and safety risks. We also invite volunteers to raise these matters.
* HT does not tolerate victimisation or harassment and will take action to protect staff and volunteers when they raise a concern in good faith.
* HT will endeavour to protect the identity of any individual who raises a whistleblowing concern and wishes to remain anonymous. However, in certain circumstances, such as any inquiry arising from the concern, the individual may be required to provide a signed statement. In certain circumstances HT may have to disclose the identity of the individual without their consent, for example where there is risk to others involved. The reasons for this will be discussed with the individual.
* Staff and volunteers who raise concerns will be offered appropriate advice and support and kept informed in relation to the progress and outcome of any inquiries. This advice and support will either from within the HT community or arranged by the Diocese of Ely.

**Raising a Concern**

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns where:

* The law may have been broken
* HT or Ely Diocese policies and procedures may have been breached
* There are concerns of a safeguarding nature

***Who***

Staff and volunteers should initially raise any concerns with the most relevant person within HT.

* Line Manager or Ministry Pastor
* Parish Safeguarding Officer
* Vicar or Associate Vicar
* Church Wardens

This is dependent upon the nature of the concerns and who might be involved. If the person raising the concern feels it is inappropriate or unsafe raising the concern to all/any of the above roles at HT, then they are to approach one of the following people at The Diocese of Ely (contact details are on the diocesan website):

* Archdeacon
* Bishop
* Diocesan Secretary
* (Or if related to Safeguarding, the Safeguarding Team on 01353 652747)

***How***

Staff and volunteers can call, write, or meet with the above person.

If meeting, the individual raising the concern may invite a supporter if they chose.

Written concerns should:

* Identify that it is a whistleblowing disclosure
* Detail the background and history of the concern/s
* Give dates and places (where possible)
* Note the reasons why the individual is particularly concerned about the situation

**Anonymous Concerns**

Anonymous concerns will be investigated as far as reasonably possible based upon the information provided, however staff and volunteers are strongly encouraged to identify themselves when reporting a concern.

**Malicious or Vexatious Concerns**

Staff should be aware that should upon serious investigation any allegation found to be malicious or vexatious it may lead to a disciplinary process for the individual concerned. Any made by a volunteer may lead to the volunteering role being reviewed or withdrawn.

To read the full Diocese of Ely’s Whistleblowing Policy, which HT endorses and has adopted as its own, visit the Diocese of Ely website (and use the website search bar to search for ‘Whistleblowing’).