



# Solar Squad Science

## Whistleblowing Policy

**Document Version: 1.0**  
**Date Issued: May 2026**  
**Review Date: May 2027**  
**Signed: Kamron Ali (Director)**



# Whistleblowing Policy

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# Whistleblowing Policy



## 1. Purpose and Statement of Intent

Solar Squad Science is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity, safeguarding, professionalism, transparency, and accountability across all aspects of its operations.

This Whistleblowing Policy provides a clear framework enabling staff, volunteers, contractors, and associated personnel to raise genuine concerns regarding wrongdoing, unsafe practice, safeguarding failures, malpractice, or unlawful conduct without fear of victimisation, reprisal, or detriment.

Solar Squad Science actively promotes a culture where concerns are raised early, listened to seriously, and managed appropriately in order to:

- Safeguard children and young people
- Protect staff and volunteers
- Promote safe professional practice
- Prevent harm or misconduct
- Maintain organisational integrity and public trust

This policy reflects the principles of:

- The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA)
- Relevant safeguarding legislation and guidance
- The safeguarding culture expectations outlined within Keeping Children Safe in Education

Concerns raised in good faith will always be taken seriously and investigated appropriately.

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## 2. Scope of This Policy

This policy applies to:

- Directors
- Employees
- Workshop leaders
- Volunteers
- Students and trainees
- Contractors
- External associates working on behalf of Solar Squad Science

This policy may be used to raise concerns relating to:

- Safeguarding failures or unsafe practice
- Risk of harm to children or vulnerable individuals
- Failure to follow safeguarding procedures
- Criminal activity including theft, fraud, corruption, or exploitation
- Failure to comply with legal or regulatory obligations
- Health and safety risks
- Professional misconduct or unethical behaviour
- Abuse of position or authority
- Discrimination, harassment, or victimisation
- Deliberate concealment of wrongdoing
- Serious breaches of organisational policies or procedures
- Improper handling of confidential information or data
- Environmental risks arising from negligent practice

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## 3. Policy Exclusions

This policy should not normally be used for:

- Routine employment grievances
- Interpersonal disputes
- Concerns regarding pay or workload
- General disagreements with management decisions where no wrongdoing is alleged
- Complaints more appropriately managed through other procedures

Where concerns fall outside the scope of whistleblowing, they will be redirected appropriately under relevant organisational procedures.

Any concern involving child protection, welfare, or safeguarding will immediately be managed under the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, which takes precedence over this policy.

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## 4. Safeguarding Priority

Solar Squad Science recognises that safeguarding concerns must always take priority.

Where a concern relates to:

- The safety or welfare of a child
- Abuse or neglect
- Unsafe professional conduct towards children
- Allegations against staff or volunteers
- Low-level safeguarding concerns

the matter must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy DSL.

Where a child is believed to be at immediate risk of harm:

- Emergency services may be contacted without delay
- Children's Social Care may be informed immediately
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) may be contacted where appropriate
- Police involvement may be sought where necessary

Safeguarding concerns will always be handled in line with statutory safeguarding guidance and the Solar Squad Science Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

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## 5. Principles of Reporting

Individuals raising concerns should, where reasonably possible, provide:

- A clear description of the concern
- Relevant dates, times, and locations
- Names of individuals involved where known
- Details of what has been witnessed, disclosed, or suspected
- Any supporting evidence available
- Reasons why the concern is believed to be serious

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing, although written disclosures are encouraged wherever possible to support accurate investigation and record keeping.

Concerns should normally be raised as soon as possible after the issue arises.

## 6. Internal Reporting Procedure

### Stage 1: Immediate Reporting

Concerns should normally be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and must occur immediately where the concern involves safeguarding.

Where the concern relates to the DSL or Director, or where the individual feels unable to report internally to them, the concern may instead be escalated to an alternative senior individual or external agency where appropriate.

All concerns raised will be:

- Taken seriously
- Acknowledged appropriately
- Assessed proportionately
- Handled sensitively and confidentially

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## Stage 2: Internal Escalation

Where concerns are not resolved appropriately or further escalation is required, concerns may be escalated to:

- A secondary safeguarding lead where appointed
- A senior director not involved in the matter
- An external safeguarding or regulatory body where appropriate

Solar Squad Science will not tolerate attempts to suppress, dismiss, or victimise legitimate whistleblowing disclosures.

## 7. External Reporting Routes

Where internal reporting is inappropriate, unsafe, or ineffective, concerns may be reported externally to appropriate organisations or regulatory bodies.

Depending on the nature of the concern, this may include:

- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Children's Social Care
- The Police
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
- Ofsted where relevant to provision environments

Independent confidential advice regarding whistleblowing may also be sought from Protect (Whistleblowing Advice Service).

Individuals should always seek immediate emergency assistance where there is believed to be an immediate risk of harm.

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## 8. Protection for Whistleblowers

Solar Squad Science is committed to ensuring that any individual raising a genuine concern in good faith:

- Will not suffer dismissal, disciplinary action, or detriment
- Will not be subjected to victimisation, harassment, or unfair treatment
- Will be treated professionally and respectfully
- Will have confidentiality maintained wherever reasonably possible

If anonymity is requested, Solar Squad Science will take reasonable steps to protect the individual's identity. However, complete anonymity cannot always be guaranteed due to the nature of safeguarding investigations, legal obligations, or formal proceedings.

No action will be taken against any person raising a concern honestly and in good faith, even where the concern is ultimately not substantiated.

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## 9. Investigation Procedure

Upon receipt of a whistleblowing concern:

- The concern will be recorded appropriately
- An initial assessment will determine urgency and risk
- Safeguarding concerns will be prioritised immediately
- Where necessary, a formal investigation will be initiated
- Investigations will be conducted fairly, proportionately, and without unnecessary delay

Investigations may involve:

- Meetings with relevant individuals
- Review of records or evidence
- Consultation with safeguarding or regulatory agencies
- Referral to external authorities where appropriate

Where reasonably practicable, feedback will normally be provided regarding:

- Whether the concern has been investigated
- Whether action has been taken
- Whether external referral has occurred
- Any lessons learned or procedural improvements identified

Certain information may remain confidential due to safeguarding, employment, legal, or data protection requirements.

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## 10. Confidentiality

All whistleblowing concerns will be treated seriously and handled confidentially on a strict need-to-know basis.

Information will only be shared where:

- Necessary to investigate the concern properly
- Required for safeguarding purposes
- Required by law or statutory agencies
- Necessary to protect children, staff, or others from harm

Records relating to whistleblowing concerns will be stored securely and managed in accordance with the Data Protection & GDPR Policy.

## 11. False or Malicious Allegations

Solar Squad Science recognises the importance of individuals being able to raise genuine concerns freely and safely.

However, where an allegation is found to have been made:

- Knowingly falsely
- Maliciously
- Frivolously
- For personal gain or malicious intent

disciplinary or contractual action may be considered.

This will not apply where concerns are raised honestly and in good faith, even where investigations do not substantiate the concern.

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## 12. Record Keeping and Governance

Appropriate records may be maintained relating to:

Concerns raised

- Investigations undertaken
- Safeguarding referrals
- Actions taken
- Outcomes and recommendations
- Policy or procedural improvements identified

Records will be:

- Handled confidentially
- Stored securely
- Retained appropriately
- Reviewed for patterns or systemic concerns
- Managed in accordance with UK GDPR and data protection requirements

Where appropriate, trends or serious concerns may be reviewed by senior leadership to strengthen safeguarding culture and organisational governance.

## 13. Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Data Protection & GDPR Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy

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## 14. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where necessary to reflect:

- operational changes
- safeguarding updates
- lessons learned from investigations or complaints
- changes in legislation or guidance
- regulatory updates

Solar Squad Science is committed to continuous improvement in safeguarding, governance, and professional accountability.

## Contact Information

### General Enquiries

- Email: [hello@solarsquadscience.co.uk](mailto:hello@solarsquadscience.co.uk)

### Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Email: [kamron@solarsquadscience.co.uk](mailto:kamron@solarsquadscience.co.uk)
- Phone: 07508237386

