

Godstuff Whistleblowing Policy

Written June 2024. Due for review June 2025.

Charity number: 1080740

Brief description of purpose of charity

Godstuff is a small charity set up to advance the Christian faith, advance education in accordance with Christian principles, provide facilities for recreation, sport or other leisure time occupation for person who have need of such facilities and to promote and fulfil other charitable purposes beneficial to the community.

Currently Godstuff has two main areas of support and provision:

- Supporting and underwriting West Hill Park Youth Holiday (also referred to as the holiday in this document)
- Offering training to churches and allied organisations

This whistleblowing policy applies to everyone who carries out the work of Godstuff.

Our commitment

We are committed to conducting our operations with integrity and honesty and we expect all our staff and volunteers to maintain high standards in accordance with our policies and procedures. However, all organisations face the risk of things going wrong from time to time. A culture of openness and accountability is important to us and essential to prevent such situations occurring or to address them when they do occur.

The aims of this policy are:

- To encourage you to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible - knowing that your concerns will be taken seriously, investigated as appropriate and confidentiality will be respected.
- To provide you with guidance on how to raise concerns.
- To reassure you that should you raise a concern, you should be able to do so without fear of reprisal.

What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing.

This may include:

- Breach of legal requirement - e.g. Health and safety obligations
- General malpractice – such as immoral, illegal or unethical conduct
- Gross misconduct
- Breach of Godstuff's policies

If you have any genuine concerns related to any of the above, you should report it under this policy.

Protected Disclosures

An individual making a 'protected disclosure' is given statutory protection from victimisation under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA), provided the disclosure is in the public interest. A 'protected disclosure' is any disclosure of information which in the reasonable belief of the individual making the disclosure tends to show that one or more of the following has been committed.

- A criminal offence
- A failure to comply with a legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- Putting someone's health and safety in danger
- Damage to the environment
- Deliberate concealing of information relating to the above

Raising a whistleblowing concern

All whistleblowing concerns will be treated as confidential and should be reported to the Chair of Trustees, by emailing Ann Clucas on clucasann@hotmail.com or by emailing directly to the Charity Commission on whistleblowing@charitycommission.gov.uk.

If reporting to the Chair of Trustees, you should make it clear that you are making your disclosure within the terms of the charity's whistleblowing policy. This will ensure that the recipient of the disclosure realises this and takes the necessary action to investigate the disclosure and to protect the whistleblower's identity. The Chair of Trustees will seek to keep you informed of the investigation as appropriate. However the need for confidentiality may prohibit us from giving specific details of the investigation or action taken. You should treat any information you are given about the investigation as confidential.

The individual designated to investigate will respond to concerns as quickly as possible. An initial enquiry may be carried out to decide whether a full investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take.

Where appropriate, the matters raised may be:

- referred to the police
- referred to the Charity Commission
- referred and put through established safeguarding procedures
- subject of an independent inquiry.

Within ten working days of a concern being raised, the person investigating the concern will write to the individual:

- acknowledging that the concern has been received
- indicating how the Godstuff proposes to deal with the matter
- informing them of whether further investigations will take place and if not, why not.

If reporting directly to the Charity Commission, you should make it clear you are reporting a concern of serious wrongdoing at a charity and answer the questions stated on the Charity Commission website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-serious-wrongdoing-at-a-charity-as-a-worker-or-volunteer>. The Charity Commission will then provide guidance.

Support of whistleblowers

We understand that it could be worrying to raise concerns, due to fears of possible repercussions. We seek to encourage openness and will support you should you raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken. If you are concerned that your identity might be revealed, you should highlight this to the Chair of Trustees who will take any appropriate measures to secure your anonymity.

We are not accountable if you choose to tell others of the alleged misdemeanour.

Where can I get independent advice?

If you need advice about blowing the whistle on a charity call Protect's free and confidential advice line: **0800 055 7214**

Protect, a specialist whistleblowing charity, can help explain:

- what types of wrongdoing you can report
- your legal rights
- next steps if you decide to report something

You can also get advice from Citizens Advice (<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/contact-us/>).

Changes to this policy and review

From time to time the Trustees may vary the procedure for good reason. For example, to avoid a conflict of interests.

This policy was ratified by the Trustees on the 22 July 2023 and will be reviewed at least every 12 months.