# WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Whistleblowing encourages and enables employees and volunteers to raise serious concerns within the organisation rather than overlooking a problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside. Staff and volunteers are often the first to realise that there is something seriously wrong within the organisation. However, they may not express their concerns as they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the organisation.

## *TheO6's Policy in relation to Whistleblowing:*

TheO6 is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment, we expect employees, volunteers and others we deal with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the organisations work to come forward and voice their concerns. TheO6 encourages all paid and unpaid staff/volunteers to come forward should they have any concerns with regard to safety or illegality. The policy encourages you to put your name to your concern whenever possible.

- You must disclose the information in good faith
- You must believe it to be substantially true
- You must not act maliciously or make false allegations
- You must not seek any personal gain.

## *Procedure:*

TheO6 recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. Whilst TheO6 would prefer to resolve such matters internally we recognise that there may be occasions where referral to an external body is necessary. In all circumstances persons raising concerns in good faith can do without fear that their jobs or standing with TheO6 will be affected even if the concern proves to be unfounded.

In the first instance concerns should be raised with the TheO6 Trustees Chairman Judith Webber (Judith Webber 07979 703237 judith.webber@gmail.com) either in writing or verbally. If the person raising the concern feels unable to raise the concern with the Trustees' Chairman then they should contact the Secretary of TheO6 (Rob Marshall 07807 027021 secretary@theo6.org.uk)

The person raising the concern should receive a response within 14 days of raising the matter. If dissatisfied they may escalate the matter through the Chair of TheO6. At each escalation point a response should be received within 14 days.

If a matter is raised anonymously it should in the first instance be discussed between the Trustees' Secretary and Chair who may refer to the full trustees' committee.

It is recognized that involvement of other external bodies such as the police or social services may become necessary in serious cases involving for example criminal activity or child abuse.

Where an allegation is made that is found to be both false and raised maliciously TheO6 trustees shall refer to its disciplinary procedure for any appropriate action to be taken.

Signed …… **Chair** *on behalf of the trustees Date ……..*

*To be reviewed:* ***August 2025***