



WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

The School has adopted this policy and the accompanying procedure to enable members of staff to raise concerns internally and in a confidential fashion about:

- fraud,
- malpractice,
- health and safety,
- criminal offences,
- miscarriages of justice, and
- failure to comply with legal obligations or
- unethical conduct.

The policy also provides, if necessary, for such concerns to be raised outside the organisation.

If a member of staff has any concerns about the welfare of a child they should refer to the Child Protection Policy.

REASONS FOR WHISTLEBLOWING

Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour

- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

PROCEDURE

The School will respect the confidentiality of staff raising concerns and will maintain confidentiality so far as is consistent with taking the issues forward effectively. This procedure also allows you to raise concerns outside the normal line management structure where necessary. Although it can be difficult to bring matters of concern to the attention of others, it is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation.

Don't think what if I'm wrong - think what if I'm right

This procedure is separate from the School's adopted procedures regarding grievances. If you have a complaint about your personal employment situation you should use the procedures in the relevant grievance policies.

This Whistleblowing Procedure is to enable members of staff to express a legitimate concern regarding suspected malpractice within the School.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Members of staff who wish to raise a concern under this procedure will not have their name disclosed to the alleged perpetrator of malpractice without their prior approval. It may be appropriate in order to preserve confidentiality that concerns are raised orally rather than in writing, although members of staff are encouraged to express their concern in writing wherever possible. If there is evidence of criminal activity then the Police will be informed in all cases.

Employees should express their concern to the Headmaster, the Head of the Pre-Prep Department, one of the Deputy Heads or the Bursar.

THE INVESTIGATION

Any concern raised will be investigated thoroughly and in a timely manner, and appropriate corrective action will be pursued. The member of staff making the allegation will be kept informed of progress and, whenever possible and subject to third party rights, will be informed of the resolution.

A member of staff who is not satisfied that their concern is being properly dealt with will have a right to raise it in confidence with the Chair of Governors whose contact details can be found in the Staff Handbook.

EXTERNAL PROCEDURES

Where all internal procedures have been exhausted, or a member of staff is not satisfied that their concern is being dealt with properly, they will have the right to raise it in confidence with the Chair of Governors.

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, there are circumstances where a member of staff may be entitled to raise a concern directly with an external body where the employee reasonably believes:

- That exceptionally serious circumstances justify it;
- That the School would conceal or destroy the relevant evidence;
- Where they believe they would be victimised by the School;
- Where the Secretary of State has ordered it.

PROTECTION FROM REPRISAL OR VICTIMISATION

No member of the staff will suffer a detriment or be disciplined for raising a genuine and legitimate concern, providing that they do so in good faith and following the Whistleblower procedure outlined above.

The School has a duty to ensure that you do not become the victim of harassment or bullying and is committed to carrying out this duty and so if you experience either of these you should bring it to the attention of a member of the Senior Management Team immediately.

MALICIOUS ACCUSATIONS

False, malicious, vexatious or frivolous accusations will be dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.

Last reviewed June 2011
Next Review September 2013