



Whistleblowing Policy



Version	Date of review	Date of next review	Completed by	Signature	Notes
V1	January 2023	January 2024			Policy creation
V3	July 2026	July 2027	Grace Shaw	G Shaw	Review and to reflect changes to education



1. About this policy

The school is committed to operating with honesty and integrity and expects all staff to maintain high standards. However, all schools face the risk that things will go wrong from time to time, or of unknowingly harbouring illegal or unethical conduct. A culture of openness and accountability is essential in order to prevent such occurrences or to ensure they are tackled.

The aims of this policy are:

- to encourage members of staff to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible, in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as appropriate, and that their confidentiality will be respected.
- to provide members of staff with guidance on how to raise those concerns.
- to reassure members of staff that they should be able to raise genuine concerns without fear of reprisals, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

This policy applies to all individuals working throughout the school, including senior managers, officers, directors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, homeworkers, part-time and fixed-term workers, casual and agency staff.

2. What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work. This policy covers disclosures made in the public interest. This might include:

- Criminal activity
- Miscarriages of justice
- Danger to health and safety
- Damage to the environment
- Failure to comply with any legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements
- Bribery
- Financial fraud or mismanagement

A whistleblower is a person who raises a genuine concern relating to any of the above. If an employee has any genuine concerns related to suspected wrongdoing or danger affecting any of the school's activities (a whistleblowing concern) they should report it under this policy.

This policy should not be used for complaints relating to an employee's own personal circumstances, such as the way they have been treated at work. In those cases, the employee should use the grievance procedure.

3. How to raise a whistleblowing concern

If employees have a genuine concern it's important to raise it, even if employees have only a gut feeling about a situation and no concrete evidence, or employees feel that they may be acting unfairly or disloyally to colleagues.

Such matters should be reported initially to their Line Manager. If the concern is against the Line Manager, then the matter should be reported to a Senior Manager and in turn if this is in relation to the Senior Manager then this should be raised with a Director.

Employees may report their concerns in person or put the matter in writing if preferred. Where appropriate, the employee's line manager may be able to agree a way of resolving the employee's concern quickly and effectively. In some cases the matter may be referred to a manager with higher authority.

Where the matter is more serious or an employee feels that their line manager has not responded to their concern, or they prefer not to raise it with them for any reason, they should contact a Senior Manager or Director as appropriate, or HR who will assist and advise employees if they:

- Need help in checking out the basis for their concern.
- Need to consider specific issues and the use of protocols and procedures.



- Are unsure whether to raise their concerns through line management.

Every issue should be taken seriously, considered fully and sympathetically without fear of reprisals, stigma, ridicule, or victimisation.

The school shall arrange a meeting with the employee as soon as possible to discuss their concern. The employee may bring a colleague or union representative to any meetings under this policy. The employee's companion must respect the confidentiality of the employee's disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

The school shall take down a written summary of the employee's concern. The school shall also aim to give the employee an indication of how it proposes to deal with the matter.

4. When to Raise Concerns

It is an employee's duty and their right to raise concerns about suspected bad practice, wrongdoing, or dangers at work. Examples of issues that must be reported include:

- A child/young person is being harmed, abused, or denied a service because of some form of discrimination.
- A policy affecting children/young people is wrongly implemented.
- Employees or child/young person are put at risk by unsafe working arrangements or improper use of information.
- Colleagues are not adhering to the school's policies or procedures.
- Fraudulent, improper, or unauthorised use is being made of money or assets belonging to the school or child/young person
- Gifts or advantages have been obtained corruptly or dishonestly.
- There is conflict between someone's private interests and those of the school.

This list is not exhaustive.

In no circumstances should any safeguarding concern be held onto by an employee, all concerns regarding the welfare of the children and staff in the workplace must be raised immediately.

Concerns about ethics and working standards that do not amount to whistleblowing concerns should be raised in the following forums:

- Supervisions
- Staff meetings
- TAC meetings
- Management meetings
- De-briefs
- Audit meetings

This will enable the school to reflect and ensure that it is working within a culture of care, professionalism and within its safeguarding policy and procedure.

5. Confidentiality

The school hopes that all employees will feel able to voice whistle-blowing concerns openly under this policy. Completely anonymous disclosures are difficult to investigate. However, if employees want to raise their concern confidentially, the school shall make every effort to keep the employee's identity secret and only reveal it where necessary to those involved in investigating the employee's concern.

The school does not encourage staff to make disclosures anonymously, although it will make every effort to investigate anonymous disclosures. Employees should be aware that proper investigation may be more difficult or impossible if the school cannot obtain further information from them. It is also more difficult to establish whether any allegations are credible. Whistleblowers who are concerned about possible reprisals if their identity is revealed should come forward to a Responsible Individual or Director and appropriate measures can then be taken to preserve confidentiality.



6. External disclosures

The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating, and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases employees should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for employees to report their concerns to an external body such as a regulator. It will very rarely if ever be appropriate to alert the media. The school strongly encourages employees to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. Protect operates a confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

7. Protection and support for whistleblowers

The school aims to encourage openness and will support whistleblowers who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

Whistleblowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a genuine concern. If employees believe that they have suffered any such treatment, they should inform their line manager or HR immediately. If the matter is not remedied the employee should raise it formally using the school's grievance procedure.

Employees must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. If employees are involved in such conduct, they may be subject to disciplinary action.

However, if the school concludes that a whistleblower has made false allegations maliciously, the whistleblower may be subject to disciplinary action.

8. Protect contact details

Protect (Independent whistleblowing charity)

Helpline: 0203 117 2520

Website: <https://protect-advice.org.uk>