



The Children's House

Whistleblowing Policy

This policy should be reviewed annually and as required by legislation.		
Action	Reviewer	Date
Review	EG	Nov 2023
Approved by Chair of COM	DD	Nov 2023
Date for next internal review		Nov 2024

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Linked Policies:

- Staff Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Staff Code of Conduct

Introduction:

The Whistleblowing Policy is intended to enable employees, agency staff and contractors to report inappropriate action or behaviour within The Children's House without fear of victimisation or retribution.

The school takes whistleblowing seriously, in order to promote a culture of openness and accountability. The school encourages all staff/volunteers to raise concerns they may have about dangerous practices or serious risk as early as possible. The Headteacher or Chair of the Council of Management will respond promptly and appropriately to any concern raised.

What is whistleblowing?

In practical terms whistleblowing occurs when a concern is raised about danger or illegality that affects others. This is different from a complaint or grievance when you are saying that you personally have been poorly treated.

The procedure applies when there is the reasonable belief that there has been wrongdoing such as:

- A danger to the health and safety of an individual
- A criminal offence
- A failure to comply with a legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice



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- Damage to the environment
- A failure to comply with the school's policies and procedures
- Any conduct which may damage the school's reputation
- Deliberate concealment of information relating to any of the above
- A breach of any legal obligation in relation to the conduct of the school's business, including activities carried out by contractors on its behalf.

In the case of a child, the school's Child Protection Policy should be followed and the concern raised with the Headteacher, who is the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Principles:

1. Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially and the outcome of the investigation will be reported back to the employee who raised the issue.
2. No employee will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that the continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training of the employee will not be prejudiced because he/she has raised a legitimate concern.
3. Victimisation of a worker for raising a specified concern will be a disciplinary offence.
4. If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure the matter will be considered under the school's disciplinary procedure, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
5. Frivolously or maliciously making a false allegation is a disciplinary offence.
6. An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is in itself a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority, employees should not agree to remain silent.

What should I do?

If an employee suspects malpractice or abuse of a member of staff no matter how senior, or of the Council of Management, he or she should raise the concerns with the Headteacher, who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead at Upper School. If the concern involves the Headteacher, the employee should inform the Chair of the Council of Management. This can be done verbally or in writing.

An employee has no responsibility for investigating the matter, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that an investigation takes place.

You do not need to have firm evidence before raising a concern. But we ask that you explain as fully as you can the information or circumstances that gave rise to your concern.

Alternatively, you can contact:

- Danielle Dufey (Chair)
- Your professional association or trade union

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 provides you with protection from victimisation, dismissal or any other detriment provided you have a reasonable belief that what you have reported is true and the report is made in good faith.

How the school will handle the matter:



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Concerns reported to the Headteacher or Chair of the Council of Management may be investigated within the school and dealt with by them or may be passed to the local authority depending upon the content of the concern.

Whenever possible, feedback on the progress and outcome of any investigation will be given to the whistleblower.

The Headteacher must report any whistleblowing to the Chair of the Council of Management within 24 hours.

For child protection, please see the Child Protection Policy under 'Allegations Against a Member of Staff/Work Experience Student/Volunteer or Visitor' for more details.

If you feel unable to raise the matter with the Headteacher or Chair of the Council of Management, for whatever reason, you can contact directly:

- **For child protection:** Islington's LADO (Timur Djavit) on 020 7527 8102.
- **For fraud:** the Financial Conduct Authority on 020 7066 9200 or email: whistle@fca.org.uk; or The National Audit Office on 020 77987000, the Charity Commission on 0300 00669197
- **For health and safety:** Health and Safety Executive on 0300 003 1747

They will also offer advice. You may also obtain advice or help from:

- Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work): Tel 020 3117 2520

Maintaining Anonymity:

You are encouraged to give your name when raising concerns. It gives the concern more weight and will make it easier to investigate.

The school recognises that whistleblowers may wish to raise concerns in confidence. If you make a request for the matter to be kept confidential, your identity will only be disclosed to those directly involved in investigating the allegation.

The Headteacher and Chair of the Council of Management will do their best to maintain your anonymity throughout the enquiry but if they consider it necessary to formally identify they will always discuss this with you in advance.

This Policy was reviewed, amended and agreed by the Council of Management in November 2023. It will be reviewed again in one year's time.

Danielle Dufey

Agreed by _____ Chair of the Council of Management