



WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

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1. Context

1.1 In this policy, the term “whistleblowing” means the confidential raising of problems or concerns within The St Marylebone Church of England School (“the School”) by a member of staff. The proper name for whistleblowing is “protected disclosure”.

1.2 We all from time to time have concerns about what is happening at work. Usually these concerns are easily resolved, but in some cases it is important to have a framework in place which allows concerns to be raised confidentially and in the knowledge that a thorough and appropriate investigation will be held to bring about a satisfactory conclusion.

1.3 The School is committed to creating a climate of trust and openness so that a person who has a genuine concern or suspicion can raise the matter with full confidence that the matter will be appropriately considered and resolved.

1.4 The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 provides the supporting legislation for this policy and is “an Act to protect individuals who make certain disclosures in the public interest to allow such individuals to bring action in respect of victimisation; and for connected purposes”.

1.5 From 25 June 2013, a “qualifying disclosure” means any disclosure of information that, in the reasonable belief of the worker, is made in the public interest.

2. Appropriate circumstances for whistleblowing

2.1 The type of activity or behaviour which the School considers should be dealt with under this policy includes:

- serious breaches of school procedures
- actions contrary to the school ethos
- abuse of position
- inappropriate behaviour with pupils
- manipulation of accounting records and finances
- inappropriate use of school assets or funds
- decision-making for personal gain
- fraud and deceit
- any criminal activity.

2.2 From 25 June 2013, a consequence of the new “public interest” requirement is that employees will generally be precluded from being able to “blow the whistle” about breaches of their own employment contract. Such matters would be dealt with under the School’s Grievance Procedures.

2.3 The School encourages you to raise your concern internally in the first instance by talking to, or preferably writing to, your line-manager. If you feel it more appropriate, you can also approach the Senior Deputy Headteacher or the Headteacher.

2.4 The individual in receipt of the information or allegation will then carry out a preliminary investigation, seeking to establish the facts of the matter and assess whether the concern has foundation and can be resolved internally. This initial assessment may identify the need to involve third parties to provide further information, advice or assistance.

2.5 Records will be kept of work undertaken and actions taken throughout the investigation. You will be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation and will receive as much feedback as possible, subject to the School’s duty of confidentiality to other parties who may be involved.

2.6 Wherever possible the School seeks to respect the confidentiality and anonymity of the whistleblower and will as far as possible protect them from any reprisals. Individuals are encouraged to come forward with genuine concerns with the knowledge that they will be taken seriously.

2.7 From June 2013 the requirement that a disclosure is made “in good faith” has been removed. If, however, an individual raises malicious or unfounded concerns or attempts to make mischief, this will also be taken seriously and may constitute a disciplinary offence.

2.8 Whistleblowers are protected by law from suffering a detriment, bullying or harassment from another employee, from 25 June 2013. Before this date, employees who made protected disclosures were protected from adverse treatment only in relation to their employer’s activity.

2.9 If you are not satisfied with the response and proposed action, are unhappy with the conduct of the investigation, or consider the matter too serious or sensitive to raise within the internal environment of the School, you should contact the Chair of the Board of Governors.