



WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY (INCLUDING EYFS)

INTRODUCTION

Harvington Preparatory School will not tolerate malpractice in any form. The school has a culture of safety and raising concerns. It also has a culture of valuing staff and reflective practice. It has established procedures for both staff and governors to raise issues, including about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime, provision for mediation and dispute resolution, with the appropriate member of staff or governor. However, there may be occasions where this process has, in the view of the individual, been unsuccessful and that malpractice still exists. Whistleblowing enables members of staff to raise concerns outside the normal management chain without fear of reprisal or persecution.

AIM

The aim of this policy is to ensure that staff are able to raise concerns in a confidential fashion about a range of issues including fraud, malpractice, health and safety, criminal offences, miscarriages of justice, and failure to comply with legal obligations or unethical conduct where the established procedures have failed. All staff have the right to blow the whistle if they believe the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Evans) is not furthering any concern about a pupil to external agencies. Staff are expected to raise any issue about another member of staff who is acting in an inappropriate way towards a pupil.

WHO IS COVERED BY THE POLICY?

All staff and Governors.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

In line with Lord Nolan's Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, Harvington Preparatory School's policy on whistleblowing is intended to demonstrate that the school:

- will not tolerate malpractice
- respects the confidentiality of staff raising concerns and will provide procedures to maintain confidentiality so far as is consistent with progressing the issues effectively
- will provide the opportunity to raise concerns outside of the normal line management structure where this is appropriate
- will invoke the school's disciplinary policy and procedure in the case of false, malicious, vexatious or frivolous allegations
- will provide a clear and simple procedure for raising concerns, which is accessible to all members of staff

This policy is separate from the school's adopted procedures regarding grievances. Staff should not use the whistleblowing procedure to raise grievances about their personal employment situation. It enables members of staff to express a legitimate concern regarding suspected malpractice within the school.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff who wish to raise a concern are entitled to have the matter treated confidentially and their name will not be disclosed to the alleged perpetrator/s of malpractice without their prior approval. It may be appropriate 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 in all cases be informed.

INVESTIGATION

A member of staff will be at liberty to express their concern to the Head. 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 outcome.

A member of staff who is not satisfied that their concern is being properly dealt with has the right to raise it in confidence with the Chair of Governors.

EXTERNAL PROCEDURES

It should be noted that 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

Staff may contact external agencies such as, the LADO, DfE, ISI, NSPCC, in relation to safeguarding, or others such as the health and safety executive, Charities Commission, etc., in relation to other issues, if internal procedures have not resolved the issue.

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HELP LINE

Members of staff, volunteers, and Governors are encouraged to use the NSPCC whistle-blowing helpline via: 0800 028 0285 should they need to do so.

MALICIOUS ACCUSATIONS

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

PROTECTION FROM REPRISAL OR VICTIMISATION

No member of 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 this policy.

TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION

All staff and governors are to be made aware of this policy as part of their induction and are to be reminded of it on an annual basis

RELATED POLICIES

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy