

The Wren School

Whistleblowing policy

Purpose and Background

This procedure is designed to deal with disclosure of information by an employee which relates to some danger, bribery, corruption, fraud or other unlawful or unethical conduct in the workplace. Employment legislation governs the making of disclosures concerning workplace activities and is intended to protect employees who blow the whistle on bad practice from being subjected to any detriment or from being unfairly dismissed as a result. This procedure is available to all employees who discover something they feel that they should pass on in the interests of the public. All types of wrongdoing are included whether they are acts committed by fellow employees, faults in school procedures or oversights which should be rectified. The procedure should be used even in the event that the act or omission causing the member of staff concern has finished or has not yet started.

This policy takes account of all relevant legislation.

Policy objectives

Nothing within this policy is intended to prevent staff from complying with their statutory obligations in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE, March 2015). In particular:

- **Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy:** A member of staff should raise any initial safeguarding concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- **Whistleblowing Policy:** A member of staff should follow this procedure to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practices at the School or potential failures by the School or staff to properly safeguard the welfare of students if he/she is concerned that the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are not being followed correctly.
- **Children's Social Care:** In exceptional circumstances, or if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care immediately.

This procedure should not however be used where a member of staff has a complaint relating to his/her personal circumstances in the workplace. The Grievance Procedure contained in the VVV Staff Employment Manual should be used in such cases.

Provided that this procedure is used appropriately and correctly a member of staff will not suffer any detriment as a result of reporting the wrongdoing. A failure to follow this procedure may however make the disclosure unreasonable and the protection given to the member of staff by this procedure may be lost.

Management of the policy

School This policy is implemented and managed by the Headteacher

Governing body	The Full Governing Body will review and update this policy on a regular basis in line with all relevant legislation.
Approval	Updated and approved by Full Governing Body – 22 September 2016
Next review due	September 2019

Associated policies

Child Protection Policy

Complaints policy

Practice and procedures

Stage one

Procedure: Staff should disclose the suspected wrongdoing first to Assistant Headteacher-Pastoral (AHP). In the event that the AHP is involved in the suspected wrongdoing, the member of staff shall be entitled to proceed directly to Stage Two of this procedure.

Response: Staff can expect a response detailing to whom the disclosure has been notified or any action taken within seven days of the AHP becoming aware of the disclosure.

Stage two

Procedure: If no response is forthcoming after seven days or if the AHP is involved in the suspected wrongdoing the member of staff shall be entitled to notify the Headteacher, as appropriate.

Response: Staff can expect a response detailing any action taken within seven days of the Headteacher becoming aware of the disclosure.

Stage three

Procedure: If no such response is forthcoming the member of staff should inform the Chair of Governors of the disclosure.

Stage four

Outside body: If the member of staff does not receive a response within seven days he/she shall be entitled to notify a relevant and appropriate body outside the School which may include:

- the Local Authority Designated Officer;
- Children's Social Care;
- the Health and Safety Executive (HSE);
- the Environment Agency;
- the Information Commissioner;
- the Department for Education (DfE);

- the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (**BERR**);
- the Police;
- the Charity Commission;
- Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted).
- The Channel Police Practitioner

Bypassing the procedure: In extreme circumstances the member of staff will have the right to raise his/her concern directly with a relevant and appropriate outside body without first having followed the stages above. This may however cause damage to the School and its reputation as well as constitute a breach of the member of staff's own duty of confidentiality towards the School and this action should only be taken in extreme circumstances and after careful thought.

Extreme circumstances: The School will consider extreme circumstances exist where a member of staff has a reasonable belief that: the School will subject him/her to detriment if he/she informs the Line Manager in accordance with Stage one above or if he/she informs the Headteacher in accordance with Stage two or he/she informs the Chair of Governors in accordance with Stage three; a cover-up is being mounted by the School; or a disclosure made previously to the Line Manager or the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors in accordance with the stages above has not prompted a satisfactory response.

The media: Even where extreme circumstances are thought to exist, the member of staff should under no circumstances approach a commercial body or the media with details of the suspected wrongdoing. If he/she approaches any such body and/or where the concern is disclosed for personal gain, the School may consider this to be gross misconduct and immediate disciplinary action may be taken against him/her.

Queries: If any member of staff has any queries about this procedure, he/she should contact the School Business Manager.

Associated documents

VWV Staff employment manual 2016