



Whistle Blowing Policy

Written By	Senior Staff & Governors
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Display on Website	✓
Purpose	This policy makes it clear what staff, or those working in the school, must do should they have child protection concerns regarding any members of staff
Consultation	Governors ✓
	Parents x
	Pupils x
	Staff ✓
Links with other policies	Safeguarding Child Protection



What is Whistle Blowing?

The Whistle Blowing procedure is about when someone 'blows the whistle' or tells someone in authority about a dangerous or illegal activity that they are aware of through their work. This can include health and safety risks, environmental issues, fraud, poor standards of care, child protection concerns and other problems.

Why is Whistle Blowing important?

'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (latest version) makes it clear that if staff have child protection concerns that they feel are not being pursued through appropriate channels, then they should 'blow the whistle'. All staff must be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. Any staff member can press for re-consideration of a case if they feel a child's situation does not appear to be improving. They must refer their concerns to the SPA directly, if they have concerns for the safety of a child: 020 8547 5008

Managers have a duty to prevent dangerous or illegal actions at work. All staff, including those who work for a contractor or agency, have an important part to play.

Who can use the Governing Body's Whistle Blowing Procedure?

- All staff, whether full time or part time, permanent or temporary.
- Students and Volunteers.
- Contractors working for the Governing Body.
- Governors.

This procedure:

- Gives you (the staff, student, volunteer, Governor or contractor) a way of raising concerns in a structured and supportive environment within the school.
- Means that you can feel confident to bring up genuinely held concerns without fear of recrimination.
- Shows the Governing Body's commitment to investigating and taking firm management action where wrongdoing may be proven.
- Encourages and enables you to raise concerns within the school rather than overlooking problems or "blowing the whistle" outside the school.

When should I raise a concern?

If you find out about activities that harm the school, colleagues working for the Governing Body, or the Governing Body itself. These may include:

- Illegal activities
- Any activity on social media that causes alarm
- Miscarriages of justice



- Risks to health and safety
- Damage to the environment
- Misuse of public funds
- Fraud and corruption
- Abuse of clients
- Other wrongdoing, (including attempts to cover up wrongdoing)

How does this procedure fit with the Governing Body's other procedures?

This procedure does not replace the school's Complaints Procedure. If you are concerned about an issue relating to your personal position at work, you should use the Complaint or Grievance procedures.

The Process

Who do I tell?

You should approach the Headteacher. But if you feel unable to do so or, you are concerned about something serious, you can email the Chair of Governors, via the Junior School Office.

or the Director of Learning and Children's Services (AfC):

Charis Penfold
Director for Education Services
Achieving for Children
Phone: 020 8547 5250 / 07770 738696
Email: charis.penfold@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Is there any support available for me?

You can get the support of a representative, who may accompany you when raising a concern. Remember that by speaking up, it is not up to you to prove your concerns. However, you should be prepared to give the background and the reasons why you feel particularly troubled.

What happens next?

The Governing Body will look into your concern to see what should happen. This may involve:

- An internal investigation
- An external auditor
- An independent inquiry
- The police



We will normally write to you within 10 working days of receiving your concerns. We will list them, tell you who is handling the matter, how you can contact them and whether we need your further help. We will also tell you where to get support if you need it.

What happens in an internal investigation?

If there is an internal investigation, a special investigations team will be set up (this may involve the Head teacher and Deputy Head teacher or Governors, depending who the concern is about). This team is responsible for gathering all relevant information and meeting with all relevant staff. The team may interview a number of staff.

When they have finished their investigation, they must produce a report on their findings. The report is then considered by a small panel of Governors or Achieving for Children directors, again depending on who the concern is about. Based on the findings, this panel will then decide what further action to take. This may include disciplinary action for anyone involved in any wrongdoing.

On the other hand, if the investigation finds that the concerns raised or allegations made by the person who has 'blown the whistle' are malicious, frivolous, or for personal gain, disciplinary action will be taken against them.

Depending on any legal restrictions on giving you information, the panel will let you know the outcome of any investigation.

Will I be involved in an investigation?

You may not want us to let people know that you have raised a concern. If we can investigate and resolve your concern without involving you, the Governing Body will not involve you further. If we are not able to resolve the problem without telling someone else who you are, we will always talk to you first.

The Governing Body encourages you to tell us who you are whenever possible as anonymous concerns are more difficult to investigate and the Governing Body cannot protect your position or give you any feedback if we don't know who you are.

Will I get into trouble? And will anyone find out that I have 'blown the whistle'?

The Governing Body does not allow the harassment or victimisation of anyone who raises a genuine concern. Harassment may result in disciplinary action.

But there may be a situation where you want to tell us of your concern and not let anyone else know that you have. If we are not able to resolve the problem without telling someone else who you are, we will always talk to you first.



Where can I get independent advice about raising a concern?

You can talk to:

- Your union
- An independent legal advisor
- The Independent Charity, Public Concern at Work. Their lawyers can give you free confidential advice on how to raise a concern about serious wrongdoing at work. <http://www.pcaw.org.uk/> or tel: 020 7404 6609

What is the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998?

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 provides workers with protection from dismissal or other damage as a result of making a disclosure of information in the public interest about wrongdoing at work. Such disclosures are protected if they are done according to the Act's provisions. Disclosures may be made to the employer, prescribed regulatory bodies or on a wider basis to the Police. The Act's protection is strongest where workers raise matters with their employers.

<http://www.pcaw.org.uk/law-policy/a-guide-to-pida>

Telling other people confidential information

Giving out information about third parties to whom the Governing Body owes a duty of confidence may not be protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act. This may lead to disciplinary action. If you are in any doubt you should seek advice from your manager, union or a lawyer.

Who is responsible for this policy?

The Governing Body