

BEECH LODGE SCHOOL
WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

We have adopted this policy and the accompanying procedure on whistleblowing to enable members of staff to raise concerns internally and in a confidential fashion about fraud, malpractice, health and safety, criminal offences, miscarriages of justice, and failure to comply with legal obligations or unethical conduct. The policy also provides if necessary, for such concerns to be raised outside the organisation.

ELEMENTS OF THE POLICY

Our policy on whistleblowing is intended to demonstrate that we:-

- Will not tolerate malpractice;
- Respect the confidentiality of staff who raise 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 our 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.

PROCEDURE

This procedure is separate from our adopted procedures regarding grievances. You should not use the whistleblowing procedure to raise grievances about your personal employment situation.

This procedure is to enable you to express a legitimate concern regarding suspected malpractice within the School.

Malpractice is not easily defined; however, it includes allegations of fraud, financial irregularities, corruption, bribery, dishonesty, acting contrary to the staff code of ethics, criminal activities, or failing to comply with a legal obligation, a miscarriage of justice, or creating or ignoring a serious risk to health, safety or the environment.

CONFIDENTIALITY

If you wish to raise a concern under this procedure you are entitled to have the matter treated confidentially and your name will not be disclosed to the alleged perpetrator of malpractice without your prior approval. It may be appropriate to preserve confidentiality that concerns are raised orally rather than in writing, although you are encouraged to express your concern in writing wherever possible. If there is evidence of criminal activity then the Police will in all cases be informed.

THE INVESTIGATION

You will be at liberty to express your 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 resolution.

If you are not satisfied that your concern is being properly dealt with you will have a right to raise it in confidence with the Proprietor. Similarly, if your concerns relate to the Head, you can raise them in confidence with the Proprietor.

EXTERNAL PROCEDURES

Where all internal procedures have been exhausted, you shall have a right of access to the Proprietor.

It should be noted that under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, there are circumstances where you may be entitled to raise a concern directly with an external body where you reasonably believe:-

- That exceptionally serious circumstances justify it;
- That we would conceal or destroy the relevant evidence;
- If you believe you would be victimised by us;
- Where the Secretary of State has ordered it.
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MALICIOUS ACCUSATIONS

False, malicious, vexatious or frivolous accusations will be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

PROTECTION FROM REPRISAL OR VICTIMISATION

You will not suffer a detriment or be disciplined for raising a genuine and legitimate concern, providing that you do so in good faith and following these procedures

March 2017

