



**DORMER
HOUSE
SCHOOL**

Whistleblowing Policy

The School has 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, inappropriate behaviour or unethical conduct. The policy also provides if necessary, for such concerns to be raised outside the organisation.

Elements of the Policy

In accordance with Lord Nolan's Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, the 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.

Procedure

This procedure is separate from the School's adopted procedures regarding grievances. Employees should not use the whistleblowing procedure to raise grievances about their personal employment situation.

This procedure is to enable members of staff 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

We hope that staff will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. However, if you want to raise your concern confidentially, every effort will be made to keep your identity secret. If it is necessary for anyone investigating your concern to know your identity, we will discuss this with you.

We do not encourage staff to make disclosures anonymously. Proper investigation may be more difficult or impossible if we cannot obtain further information from you. It is also more difficult to establish whether any allegations are credible. Whistleblowers should make any concerns about possible reprisals if their identity is revealed known so that appropriate measures can then be taken to preserve confidentiality.

In order not to jeopardise the investigation, you are also expected to keep the fact that you have raised a concern, the nature of the concern and the identity of those involved confidential.

The Investigation

A member of staff will be at liberty to express their concern to the Head Teacher in the first instance. If you would prefer not to speak with the Head Teacher, you can instead speak to a member of the Senior Management Team.

Any concern raised will be investigated thoroughly and in a timely manner, and appropriate corrective action will be pursued.

The length and scope of the investigation will depend on the subject matter of the disclosure. We reserve the right to arrange for another member of the Senior Management Team to conduct the investigation other than the person with whom you raised the matter. In addition, an investigative team with experience of operating workplace procedures or specialist knowledge of the subject matter of the disclosure may be appointed. It is not normally appropriate to set a specific timeframe for completion of investigations in advance, because the diverse nature of disclosures makes this unworkable.

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.

A member of staff who is not satisfied that their concern is being properly dealt with will have a right to raise it in confidence with the Trustees.

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 (for example HM Revenue & Customs, The Financial Services Authority or the Health and Safety Executive) 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;
- Where the Secretary of State has ordered it.

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 the 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 the Whistleblower procedures.



Signed:

Date: 1st September 2015