

New Islington Free School

Whistleblowing Policy

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Whistleblowing policy

- 1 **Wrongdoing at work:** 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 you concern has finished or has not yet started.
- 2 **Grievances:** This procedure should not be used, however, where you have a complaint relating to your personal circumstances in the workplace. In such cases, you should instead use the School's Grievance Procedure, which is also contained in this Employment Manual.
- 3 **Detriment:** Provided that this procedure is used correctly and you make the disclosure in good faith, you 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 you by this procedure may be lost as a result.

Stage one

- 4 **Procedure:** You should disclose the suspected wrongdoing first to the School Business Manager. In the event that the latter is or might be involved in the suspected wrongdoing, you shall be entitled to proceed directly to Stage Two of this procedure.
- 5 **Response:** You can expect a response detailing to whom the disclosure has been notified, or any action taken, within seven days of the School Business Manager becoming aware of it.

Stage two

- 6 **Procedure:** If no response is forthcoming after seven days, or if the School Business Manager is or might be involved in the suspected wrongdoing, you shall be entitled to notify the Principal.
- 7 **Response:** You can expect a response detailing any action taken within seven days of the Principal becoming aware of the disclosure.

Stage three

- 8 **Procedure:** If no such response is forthcoming you should inform the Chair of Governors of the disclosure.

Stage four

- 9 **Outside body:** If you do not receive a response within seven days of the Chair of Governors becoming aware of the disclosure, you shall be entitled to notify a relevant and appropriate body outside the School which may include:

the Health and Safety Executive
the Environment Agency
the Information Commissioner
the Department for Education
the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
the Police

- 10 **Bypassing the procedure:** In extreme circumstances you will have the right to raise your 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 your own duty of confidentiality towards the School. Consequently, this action should be taken only in extreme circumstances and after careful thought.
- 11 **Extreme circumstances:** The School will consider extreme circumstances exist where you have a reasonable belief that:
- the School will subject you to detriment if you inform (1) the School Business Manager in accordance with Stage one above, or (2) the Principal in accordance with Stage two, or (3) 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 appropriate person(s) in accordance with the stages above has not prompted a satisfactory response.
- 12 **The media:** Even where extreme circumstances are thought to exist, under no circumstances should you approach a commercial body or the media with details of the suspected wrongdoing. If you approach any such body and / or where your concern is disclosed for personal gain, the School may consider this to be gross misconduct and immediate disciplinary action may be taken against you.
- 13 **Queries:** If you have any queries about this procedure you should contact the School Business Manager.