

ST PAUL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Park Lane
Cheshunt
HERTS EN7 6LR



“Whistleblowing” Policy and Procedure

1 Preamble

St Paul's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is a Catholic school, founded by and forming part of the Catholic Church. In addition to the Church's funds which established the school, it is sustained in its mission by receipt of public funds. Accordingly it is accountable to the Catholic community of which it is a part and which provided the school and to the public whose funds it expends.

The school is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity, conduct and accountability. In line with that commitment we expect employees and others with whom we deal, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the school's work to come forward and voice those concerns. It is recognised that most cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis.

This policy makes it clear that you can do so without fear of victimisation, discrimination or disadvantage. This policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within the school in the first instance so that it is not necessary to resort to outside agencies. Any concern that an employee may have about illegal or improper conduct will be treated seriously.

Employees who do not follow the steps identified in this procedure or other agreed internal procedures, and take their concerns to other outside sources (e.g. the press), may be subject to a formal disciplinary investigation.

2 Aims and Scope of this Policy

There are existing procedures in place to enable you to lodge a grievance relating to your own employment. This policy is intended to cover major concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures. These include:

- conduct which is an offence, a breach of the law or contrary to Church teaching;
- disclosures related to miscarriages of justice;
- health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees;
- damage to the environment;
- the unauthorised use of public or Church funds;
- possible fraud and corruption;
- abuse of students;
- other unethical or immoral conduct;
- dangerous practices at work
- corruptly receiving any gift or advantage, thus failing to comply with the Bribery Act 2010

Thus, any serious concerns that you have about any aspect of service provision or the conduct of employees or governors of the school or others acting on behalf of the school can be reported under this policy. This may be something that makes you feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards, your experience or the values, beliefs and standards to which the school subscribes; is against the school's trust deed or instrument of government or policies; falls below established standards of practice; or amounts to improper conduct.

3 What is the purpose of this procedure?

This procedure is designed to enable employees to notify the Headteacher (but see section 8) of any reasonable suspicion of illegal or improper conduct. Where the concerns are about safeguarding children or young people, the school's Designated Senior Person for Child Protection should be notified.

The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection at St Paul's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is Mrs Debbie Moore.

The Headteacher will be expected to act swiftly and constructively in the investigation of any concerns in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedure.

Concern about a colleague's professional capability should not be dealt with using this procedure.

4 Safeguards

The school will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice will not influence you or be influenced by any disciplinary or redundancy procedures that might affect you.

5 Confidentiality

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness. You also have a duty to observe this confidentiality.

6 Anonymous Allegations

You are encouraged to put your name to your allegation wherever possible. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful but will be considered at the discretion of the school. In exercising this discretion the factors to be taken into account will include:

- the seriousness of the issue raised;
- the credibility of the concern and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

7 Untrue Allegations

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously, or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

8 How to Raise a Concern

If you have any concerns you should raise these with the Headteacher. Where the issue concerns the Headteacher or, having made your report, you believe he/she has failed to take appropriate action, then you should bring it to the attention of the Chair of Governors. If you also suspect involvement by the chair, then you should contact the Diocesan Director of Education.

Employees who feel unable to follow this route, for whatever reason, have the option of contacting one of the names listed in section 10.

You will be given the opportunity to discuss your suspicions and an appropriate person will be designated as investigating officer, who will arrange for an investigation to take place.

Depending on the nature of the concern the complainant will be asked to justify and support their claim. Normally the complainant will be asked to do this in writing. It will, therefore, be helpful to note down any facts and dates as they happen.

Within ten working days of your initial meeting, the investigating officer will write to confirm the details of your concern and that an investigation will take place. Throughout the investigation, you will be kept informed of progress and you will normally be advised of the eventual outcome, subject to third party rights. All correspondence will be addressed to your home. If a meeting is needed, it may be arranged off site if you wish, and a union representative or a friend may accompany you. Although records will need to be kept as the enquiries progress, these will be of an anonymous nature.

There can be no prescribed time limits for completion of the investigative process, but it will obviously be in the interests of all concerned if the issue is resolved without delay.

When the investigation is complete a report will be presented to the governing body, which will decide upon the appropriate course of action. Subject to any relevant legal constraints, you will be informed of the action to be taken. If you do not agree with the outcome then you will have seven days in which to make your concerns known to the governing body, via the chairman. If you remain dissatisfied with the response from the governing body, then you may consider contacting the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, who has the power to intervene if the governing body appears to be acting unreasonably. You should be aware, however, that this course of action could have serious implications for the school.

At no stage should you contact the media without the written permission of the Chairman of the Governing Body. Such action would be a breach of confidentiality and could result in disciplinary proceedings against you.

Financial regulations require any employee who suspects fraud, corruption or other financial irregularity to ensure this is reported to Internal Audit for possible investigation. Normally any suspicion of such an irregularity should be reported to the Headteacher first (see first paragraph of this section), who will in turn report it to Internal Audit.

If a member of staff (other than the Headteacher) is approached by a colleague on a matter of concern he/she should be advised to take the matter to the Headteacher (see first paragraph of this section).

9 Safeguarding Children and Young People

All employees have a duty to report concerns about the safety and welfare of pupils.

Concerns about any of the following should be reported to the school's Designated Senior Person for Child Protection (DSP).

- physical abuse of a pupil
- sexual abuse of a pupil
- emotional abuse of a pupil
- neglect of a pupil
- an intimate or improper relationship between an adult and a pupil.

The school's DSP is Mrs Debbie Moore

The reason for the concern may be the actions of a colleague (including a more senior colleague), a governor, another pupil or someone outside the school. Whatever the reason, concerns must be reported.

8 List of Contacts

Headteacher: Mrs Yvonne Devereux
head@stpauls373.herts.sch.uk

DSP: Mrs Debbie Moore
dmoore@stpauls373.herts.sch.uk

Chair of Governors: Mrs Wendy Franklin
franklin_d1@sky.com

Clerk to Governors: Mr Tom Stacey
tom.stacey@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Archdiocese of Westminster Schools and Families

Vaughan House Department for Education and Skills
46 Francis Street Sanctuary Buildings
London SW1P 1QN Great Smith Street
020 7798 9005 London SW1P 3BT
020 7925 5000

Herts HR

Assistant Director HR: Louise Tibbert
Tel: 01992 556653

Legal, Member and Statutory Services

Chief Legal Officer: Kathryn Pettitt
Tel: 01992 555527

County Internal Audit

Head of Assurance Services: Helen Maneuf
Tel: 01438 845502

Standards and School Effectiveness

Lead Officer Schools' HR Advice: Roy Hardcastle

Tel: 01438 843789

Or any of the following trade union and professional association representatives:

UNISON

Mr Keith Price/Mr Brian Ruggles
The Flats
County Hall
Hertford
SG12 8DN
Tel@ 01992 556260

NASUWT

Mr C Surrey
31 Horn Hill
Whitwell
Herts
SG4 8AZ
Tel: 07725704487

ATL

Mr A Hathway
30 Webb Close
Letchworth
Herts
SG6 2TY
Tel: 07823888613

NAHT

Mr R Woodhouse
Essendon CE Primary School
School Lane
Essendon
AL9 6HD

VOICE (formerly PAT)

Mr D Colligan
2 St James Court
Friar Gate
Derby
DE1 1BT
Tel: 013840349211

ASCL

Ms T Nickson
Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School
Woods Avenue
Hatfield
Herts
AL10 8NL
Tel: 01707275331

Ms A Saunders
Simon Balle School
Mangrove Road
Hertford
Herts
SG13 8AY
Tel: 01992 410400

NUT
Mr F Breheny
131 Ashcroft Road
Stopsley
Luton
LU2 9AY
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