



## WHISTLEBLOWING PROCEDURE

**MISSION STATEMENT:** St. Mary's strives to become a lively Christian community based on mutual love and respect, to educate young people to meet the challenges of life confidently, to develop their personal talents to the full and to live out the values of Christ and His Gospel.

To be read in conjunction with the following policies: Anti-Bullying Policy; Anti-Discrimination Policy; Behaviour & Discipline Policies; Equal Opportunities Policy; Fire safety & Disaster Management; Health And Safety Policy; Mobile Phone Policy; Physical Restraint Policy; Playground Supervision Policy; Policy on Lost Children In School; Policy on Non-Collection of Children; Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

“Whistleblowing” is defined as **‘raising concerns about misconduct within an organisation’** (Nolan Committee Report on Standards in Public Life, 1996) which has added legal backing from the Public Disclosure Act 1998 stating that it is **‘to protect individuals who make certain disclosures in the public interest; to allow such individuals to bring action in respect of victimisation; and for connected purposes.’**

SMC/Charlton House School expects the highest standards of conduct from all employees and will treat seriously any concern that an employee may have about illegal or improper conduct. All employees of the school will be expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the headteacher any serious impropriety or breach of procedure.

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROCEDURE?

This procedure is designed to enable employees to notify the headteacher of any reasonable suspicion of illegal or improper conduct. Through this procedure the headteacher will be expected to act swiftly and constructively in the investigation of any concerns in accordance with the Staff Disciplinary Procedure.

### WHEN SHOULD THIS PROCEDURE BE USED?

This procedure is not designed to replace or be used as an alternative to the Grievance Procedure, which should be used if an employee is only aggrieved about his/her situation. Employees who are worried about wrong doing at work do not necessarily have a personal grievance. Whistleblowing procedures should be followed if concerns relate to something which:

- is against the school’s policies
- falls below established standards of practice; or
- amounts to improper conduct, including something an employee believes to be:

- against the law
  - Safety risk
  - damaging the environment
  - funds, assets
  - corruption or unethical conduct
  - allowing private interests to override interests of the school
  - dangerous practice, a Health and Safety risk
  - fraudulent or misuse of school's funds, assets
  - abuse of pupils
- concealment of any of the above by an employee

## **MECHANISM FOR RAISING CONCERNS**

All employees must act in good faith and must have reasonable grounds for believing the information to be accurate. No employee who uses this procedure in good faith will be penalised for doing so. SMC/Charlton House School will not tolerate harassment and/or victimisation of any employee raising concerns.

Financial regulations require any employee who suspects fraud, corruption or other financial irregularity to ensure that this is reported to the Chief Internal Auditor for possible investigation. Under normal circumstances any suspicion of irregularity is first reported to the headteacher who in turn passes the relevant information on.

Where the concerns are about Safeguarding children or young people, the designated Child Protection Officer, C. Lickley (SMC) D. Owen (CH) B. Smith (EYFS) should be notified immediately and the Safeguarding and Child Protection – Allegations of Abuse Policies be adhered to. All employees have a duty to report any concerns about the safety and welfare of any pupil including;

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

Where the issue concerns the headteacher or, having made the report, the employee believes that the headteacher has failed to take the appropriate action, the matter should then be brought to the attention of the Chair of Trustees (Bro. Francis). Depending on the nature of the concern the complainant will be asked to justify and support the claim. Normally the complainant will be asked to do this in writing and therefore it is helpful to note down any facts and dates as they happen.

If a member of staff (other than the headteacher) is approached by a colleague on a matter of concern as defined in this policy, they should be advised to take

the matter to the headteacher immediately unless it is concerning the headteacher, in which case the Chair of Trustees should be contacted.

### **THIRD PARTIES**

Employees who want to use this procedure but feel uneasy about it may wish to consult their trade union initially and bring a friend or trade union representative along to any discussions, so long as the third party is independent of the issue.

Where anonymity is requested efforts will be made to meet the request where appropriate but this might not always be possible. The earlier and more open the expression of concern, the easier it will be to take the appropriate action.

Each case will be investigated thoroughly with the aim of informing the complainant of the outcome as quickly as possible.

Any employee who is not sure whether the conduct they are concerned about constitutes illegal or improper behaviour, or is in any way unsure how to proceed, can contact the names/departments listed below for advice.

#### **CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

Children's Services & Learning  
Civic Centre  
Southampton  
Hants  
SO15 7LY

[Children.first@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:Children.first@southampton.gov.uk)  
02380 233344)

023 8083 33336 (out of hours:

**PUBLIC CONCERN AT WORK**  
Suite 306, 16 Baldwins Gardens  
London, EC1N 7RJ  
020 7404 6609

<http://www.pcaw.co.uk/index.html>

Diocesan Protection Team 01329 834677

#### **Local Trade Unions & Professional Associations**

NUT Pete Sopowski – 023 80292410 or email: [secretary@southampton-division.nut.org.uk](mailto:secretary@southampton-division.nut.org.uk)

Regional Office – 01444 894500 or email: [south.east@nut.org.uk](mailto:south.east@nut.org.uk)

Write to,

NASUWT Office – 01483 226130 or email: [rc-southeast@mail.nasuwt.org.uk](mailto:rc-southeast@mail.nasuwt.org.uk)  
Write to, Milestone House  
Portsmouth Road  
Send  
Surrey GU23 7JZ

EMPLOYEE SUPPORT LINE – 0800 0274939

TEACHER SUPPORT NETWORK – 0800 562 561

**Reviewed:**

Feb 2011/ DO					