



**The White House Preparatory School
and
Woodentops Day Nursery**

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

KCSIE states that if a teacher or member of staff has concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff towards a pupil, he or she should report it at once to the Headmaster and to the designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection (or to the Principal where the concern relates to the Headmaster). Any concern will be thoroughly investigated under the school's whistle-blowing procedures. Such reporting will be without prejudice to the member of staff's position in the school. Where there are allegations of criminal activity, the LADO will always be informed, and advice taken, before the school undertakes any investigation of its own. Wherever possible, and subject to the rights of the pupil, the member of staff will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. No one who reports a genuine concern in good faith needs to fear retribution. Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 the member of staff may be entitled to raise a concern directly with an external body where the circumstances justify it.

**Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong.
Do not ignore these concerns, report them.**

However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the school. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice.

The School is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment we expect employees, and others that we deal with, 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.

The policy document makes it clear that you can do so without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. This whistleblowing policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns **within** the School rather than overlooking a problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside.

The policy applies to all employees and those contractors working for the school on school premises, for example, lunch staff, builders, drivers. It also covers suppliers and those providing services under a contract with the School whether on site or off site.





This policy aims to:

- encourage those who have a concern to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice
- provide avenues for those who wish to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken
- ensure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue them if satisfaction is not provided.
- reassure you that anyone reporting a concern will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if they have a reasonable belief that they have made any disclosure in good faith.

The school has a complaints procedure also a grievance procedure which are in addition to the whistleblowing procedures.

The whistleblowing policy is intended to cover major concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures.

These include:

- conduct which is an offence or a breach of law
- disclosures related to miscarriages of justice
- health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees
- damage to the environment
- possible fraud and corruption
- sexual or physical abuse of pupils or colleagues or
- other unethical conduct

Any serious concerns that you have about any aspect of the conduct of members of the school or others acting on behalf of the School can be reported under the whistleblowing policy.

Safeguards: Harassment or Victimisation

The school is committed to good practice and high standards and wants to be supportive of employees.

The school recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. If what you are saying is true, you should have nothing to fear because you will be doing your duty to your employer and those for whom you are providing a service.

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.



Principal Mrs M. McCahery Cert Ed **Headmaster** Joe Knight BA Hons, PCGE, NPQH

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

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.

Anonymous Allegations

This policy encourages anyone with a concern to put their name to their concerns/allegation whenever 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 would include:

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

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.

How to Raise a Concern

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with a member of the Senior Leadership Team, most usually the Headteacher. If your concern is about the Headteacher you should report directly to the Principal or Vice Principals. Staff may also report, or self-report, Low Level Concerns about behaviour or conduct of colleagues (see the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. Staff who wish to make a written report are invited to use the following format:

- the background and history of the concern (giving relevant dates);
- the reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation.

The earlier you express the concern the easier it is to take action.



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Although you are not expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of an allegation, you will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are reasonable grounds for your concern.

You may wish to consider discussing your concern with a colleague first and you may find it easier to raise the matter if there are two (or more) of you who have had the same experience or concerns.

You may invite your trade union, professional association representative or a friend to be present during any meetings or interviews in connection with the concerns you have raised.

How the School will Respond

The school will respond to your concerns. Do not forget that testing out your concerns is not the same as either accepting or rejecting them.

Where appropriate, the matters raised may:

- be investigated by management, internal audit, or through the disciplinary process
- be referred to the police
- be referred to the external auditor
- form the subject of an independent inquiry.

In order to protect individuals and those accused of misdeeds or possible malpractice, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. The overriding principle which the school will have in mind is the public interest. Concerns or allegations which fall within the scope of specific procedures (for example, Safeguarding/child protection or discrimination issues) will normally be referred for consideration under those procedures.

Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation. If urgent action is required this will be taken before any investigation is conducted.

Within ten working days of a concern being raised, the responsible person will write to you:

- acknowledging that the concern has been received
- indicating how we propose to deal with the matter
- giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response
- telling you whether any initial enquiries have been made
- supplying you with information on staff support mechanisms, and
- telling you whether further investigations will take place and if not, why not.



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The amount of contact between the person considering the issues and you will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided. If necessary, the school will seek further information from you.

Where any meeting is arranged, off-site if you so wish, you can be accompanied by a union or professional association representative or a friend.

The school will take steps to minimise any difficulties which you may experience as a result of raising a concern. For instance, if you are required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings the school will arrange for you to receive advice about the procedure.

The school accepts that you need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. Thus, subject to legal constraints, we will inform you of the outcome of any investigation.

The Responsible Officer

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy and a record of concerns raised and the outcome (but in a form which does not endanger your confidentiality) is held. Should the concern be about the Headteacher then the Principal or one of the Vice Principals will have overall responsibility.

How the Matter can be Taken Further

This policy is intended to provide you with an avenue within the school to raise concerns. The school hopes you will be satisfied with any action taken. If you are not, and if you feel it is right to take the matter outside the school, the following are possible contact points:

- Public Concern at Work (tel: 020 7404 6609), a registered charity whose services are free and strictly confidential
- your trade union
- your local Citizens Advice Bureau
- relevant professional bodies or regulatory organisations
- a relevant voluntary organisation
- the police.
- **OFSTED Safeguarding Children** 08456 404046 (Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm)
Whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk
- **The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line** 0800 028 0285.

If you do take the matter outside the school, you should ensure that you do not disclose confidential information. Check with the contact point about that.



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THE
**WHITE
HOUSE**
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Policy will be reviewed every 2 years			
Policy reviewed:	Sept 16	By:	Principal & Headteacher
Policy reviewed:	Sept 17	By:	Principal & Headteacher
Policy reviewed:	Sept 18	By:	Principal & Headteacher
Policy reviewed:	Sept 19	By:	Principal & Headteacher
Policy reviewed:	Sept 20	By:	Principal & Headteacher
Policy reviewed:	Sept 21	By:	Principal & Headteacher
Policy reviewed:	Sept 23	By:	Principal & Headteacher
Policy reviewed:	Sept 25	By:	Principal & Headteacher
To be reviewed:	Sept 27	By:	Principal & Headteacher



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