

REVISED WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

AIM/PURPOSE

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 was established to protect workers who 'blow the whistle' about malpractice or wrongdoings within an organisation. For schools this is relevant especially in relation to safeguarding children and financial management. If staff have serious concerns they should be able to raise them within or outside the school, without fear of recrimination, such as denial of promotion or training opportunities or, in extreme cases, dismissal. Concerns relating to an individual's own employment should be addressed through the grievance procedure.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Disclosures qualifying for protection are those when the employee believes, in good faith, that one or more of the following matters took place in the past, is happening now, or is likely to happen in the future:

- ◆ A criminal offence.
- ◆ The breach of a legal obligation.
- ◆ A miscarriage of justice.
- ◆ A danger to the health or safety of an individual.
- ◆ Damage to the environment.
- ◆ Deliberate covering up of information tending to show any of the above.

The employee must have reasonable belief that the information disclosed tends to show one or more of the offences or breaches listed above, known as 'a relevant failure'. The belief need not be correct – it might be discovered subsequently that the employee was, in fact, wrong – but the employee must show that he or she held the belief, and that it was a reasonable belief in the circumstances at the time of disclosure. The employee, therefore, acted in good faith and not for personal gain.

In the context of the school, concerns may include specifically:

- ◆ Misuse of public money.
- ◆ Abuse of students.
- ◆ Corruption or unethical conduct.
- ◆ Damaging the environment.
- ◆ A health and safety risk.
- ◆ Breaking the law.
- ◆ Bringing the name/reputation of the school into disrepute.
- ◆ Concealment of any of the above.

WHISTLE BLOWING AT TRINITY CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

The Head should be the initial point of contact. If the concern is about the Head, then the matter should be taken up with the Chair of Governors.

- ◆ The concern should be expressed verbally or in writing at the earliest opportunity.
- ◆ The member of staff 'blowing the whistle' may wish to take advice from a professional association.
- ◆ A response can be expected within 5 working days.
- ◆ If the 'whistle blower' is concerned that the matter has not been addressed adequately then, depending on the concern, representation should be made to either the Chair of Governors or the Manchester Diocese.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This will take place through the Governors' Personnel Committee and ratified by the Full Governing Body.

