

# Rishworth School: Whistle-blowing Policy

Reviewed by: ASG
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*Distribution: Internal policy files only*

## 1. The Policy

1.1 **Whistle-blowing** is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work. This may include:

- (a) matters relating to child protection and safeguarding
- (b) criminal activity;
- (c) miscarriages of justice;
- (d) danger to health and safety;
- (e) damage to the environment;
- (f) failure to comply with any legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements;
- (g) financial fraud or mismanagement;
- (h) the deliberate concealment of any of the above matters.

1.2 A **whistle-blower** is a person who raises a genuine concern relating to any of the above. If you have any genuine concerns related to suspected wrongdoing or danger affecting any of our activities (a **whistle-blowing concern**) you should report it under this policy.

1.3 This policy should not be used for complaints relating to your own personal circumstances, such as the way you have been treated at work. In those cases you should use the Grievance Procedure.

## 2. Raising a whistle-blowing concern

2.1 We hope that in many cases you will be able to raise any concerns with your line manager. You may tell them in person or put the matter in writing if you prefer.

2.2 However, where the matter is more serious, or you feel that your line manager has not addressed your concern, or you prefer not to raise it with them for any reason, you should contact The Headmaster (Teaching staff) or Bursar (Support staff).

2.3 We will arrange a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You may bring a colleague or union representative to any meetings under this policy. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

- 2.4 We will take down a written summary of your concern and provide you with a copy after the meeting. We will also aim to give you an indication of how we propose to deal with the matter.

### **3. External disclosures**

- 3.1 The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.

- 3.2 The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator. It will very rarely if ever be appropriate to alert the media. The law allows you to raise a concern in good faith with a third party, where you reasonably believe it relates mainly to their actions or something that is legally their responsibility. However, we encourage you to report such concerns internally first.

### **4. Investigation and outcome**

- 4.1 Once you have raised a concern, we will carry out an initial assessment to determine the scope of any investigation. We will inform you of the outcome of our assessment. You may be required to attend additional meetings in order to provide further information.

- 4.2 We will aim to keep you informed of the progress of the investigation and its likely timescale. However, sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent us giving you specific details of the investigation or any disciplinary action taken as a result. You should treat any information about the investigation as confidential.

- 4.3 If we conclude that a whistle-blower has made false allegations maliciously, in bad faith or with a view to personal gain, the whistle-blower will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **5. Protection and support for whistle-blowers**

- 5.1 It is understandable that whistle-blowers are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. We aim to encourage openness and will support staff who raise genuine concerns in good faith under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

- 5.2 Staff must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a concern in good faith. Detrimental treatment includes dismissal, disciplinary action, threats or other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern.

5.3 Staff must not threaten or retaliate against whistle-blowers in any way. Anyone involved in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action.

5.4 If you suffer an accident at work you (or someone on your behalf) must report that fact to your manager as soon as possible. All accidents should be reported, however trivial. The accident will be recorded in our Accident Book.

**Related Policies (not exhaustive):**

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Recruitment
- Staff Behaviour
- Health and Safety
- IT related
- Allegations against staff
- Anticorruption and Bribery
- Capability, Grievance and Discipline

**ASG**