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Approving Body	Board of Governors
Date Approved	February 2017
Effective Date	February 2017
Review Date	February 2018



St Aubyn's School Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

Policy

St Aubyn's policy on whistleblowing is designed to enable members of staff to raise concerns, either internally or outside the organisation, and in a confidential fashion, about fraud, malpractice, health and safety, child protection, criminal offences, miscarriages of justice and failure to comply with legal obligations or unethical conduct. This policy is intended to demonstrate that the school:-

- Will not tolerate malpractice;
- Respects the confidentiality of staff raising concerns and will provide procedures to maintain confidentiality so far as is consistent with progressing the issues effectively;
- Will provide the opportunity to raise concerns outside of the normal line management structure where this is appropriate;
- Will invoke the School's disciplinary policy and procedure in the case of false, malicious, vexatious or frivolous allegations;
- Will provide a clear and simple procedure for raising concerns, which is accessible to all members of staff.

Procedure

This procedure is to enable members of staff to express a legitimate concern regarding suspected malpractice within the School.

Malpractice is not easily defined; however, it includes allegations of fraud, financial irregularities, corruption, bribery, dishonesty, acting contrary to the staff code of ethics, criminal activities, or failing to comply with a legal obligation, a miscarriage of justice, or creating or ignoring a serious risk to health, safety or the environment.

If staff and volunteers feel unable to raise an issue with the School or feel that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they may use other whistleblowing channels such as the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (tel: 0800 028 0285 or email:help@nspcc.org.uk).

This procedure is separate from the School's adopted procedures regarding grievances. Employees should not use the whistleblowing procedure to raise grievances about their personal employment situation.

Confidentiality

Employees who wish to raise a concern under this procedure are entitled to have the matter treated confidentially and their name will not be disclosed to the alleged perpetrator of malpractice without their prior approval. It may be appropriate to preserve confidentiality that concerns are raised orally rather than in

writing, although members of staff are encouraged to express their concern in writing wherever possible. If there is evidence of criminal activity then the Police will be informed.

The Investigation

A member of staff will be at liberty to express their concern to either the Head or Deputy or the Bursar. If the concern relates to the Head, the member of staff should raise their concern with the Deputy Head.

Any concern raised will be investigated thoroughly and in a timely manner, and appropriate corrective action will be pursued. The member of staff making the allegation will be kept informed of progress and, whenever possible and subject to third party rights, will be informed of the Resolution.

A member of staff who is not satisfied that their concern is being properly dealt with will have a right to raise it in confidence with the Trustees.

External Procedures

Where all internal procedures have been exhausted, a member of staff shall have a right of access to an external person/body. This may include (depending on the subject matter of the disclosure) HMRC, the Audit Commission, the Health & Safety Executive and/or the Local Authority Designated Officer (where disclosure relates to a child protection issue).

It should be noted that under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, there are circumstances where a member of staff may be entitled to raise a concern directly with an external body where the employee reasonably believes :-

- That exceptionally serious circumstances justify it;
- That the School would conceal or destroy the relevant evidence;
- Where they believe they would be victimised by the School;
- Where the Secretary of State has ordered it.

Malicious Accusations

False, malicious, vexatious or frivolous accusations will be dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.

Protection from Reprisal or Victimisation

No member of the staff will suffer a detriment or be disciplined for raising a genuine and legitimate concern, providing that they do so in good faith and following the Whistleblower procedures.

January 2017 MF