

**St John's C of E Primary & Nursery School Kingston**

**Whistle Blowing**

**Policy**

Written:

Reviewed:

Review:

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**Resources Committee**

**Lulu Esua**

**Mission Statement**

St John’s nurtures the educational, spiritual and moral development of all within its community, regardless of culture and belief. We foster in our pupils mutual respect and responsibility based on the core Christian values, and fulfil our school motto: “Believe Inspire Achieve”.

**Vision**

Our vision is for our whole school community, through the love of God, to respect and understand the Christian values and the beliefs of others.

We ensure that our children are happy, successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve their full potential.

Our Christian values will inspire our children to develop resilience and confidence.

Our children will lead safe, healthy, caring and fulfilling lives, becoming responsible citizens who make positive contributions to society.

We want everyone is our school to flourish and to know ‘life in all its fullness’ (John 10:10).

**Rights Respecting School**

St John’s School is working towards becoming a Rights Respecting School and as such strongly believes in and promotes the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This policy exemplifies these rights and our practice aims to ensure that Children’s rights are at the centre of life at St John’s.



1

**Introduction**

**What Is Whistle Blowing?**

Someone blows the whistle when they tell someone in authority about a dangerous or illegal activity that they are aware of through their work. This can include health and safety risks, environmental issues, fraud, poor standards of care and other problems.

**Why Is Whistle Blowing Important?**

The Governing Body is committed to high quality services and being open, fair and honest.

Managers have a duty to prevent dangerous or illegal actions at work. All staff, including those who work for a contractor or agency, have an important part to play. Often it is only through whistle blowing that information comes to light.

This procedure:

* Supports the Public Interest Disclosure Act.
* Gives you a way of raising concerns in a structured and supportive environment within the school.
* Means that you can feel confident to bring up genuinely held concerns without fear of recrimination.
* Shows the Governing Body’s commitment to investigating and taking firm management action where wrongdoing may be proven.
* Encourages and enables you to raise concerns within the school rather than overlooking problems or "blowing the whistle" outside the school.

**Who Can Use the Governing Body’s Whistle Blowing Procedure?**

* All staff, whether full time or part time, permanent or temporary;
* Students, Volunteers and Governors.
* Contractors working for the Governing Body.

**When Should I Raise A Concern?**

If you find out about activities that harm the school, colleagues working for the Governing Body, or the Governing Body itself. These may include:

* Illegal activities;
* Miscarriages of justice;
* Risks to health and safety;
* Damage to the environment;
* Misuse of public funds;
* Fraud and corruption;
* Abuse of clients;
* Other wrongdoing, (including attempts to cover up wrongdoing).

For example, you could raise a serious concern about service provision, the actions of staff, or the actions of others acting on behalf of the Governing Body, which:

2

* Fall below the Governing Body’s standards of practice, including any Code of Conduct for

Employees;

* Are against the Governing Body’s policies;
* Amount to improper conduct.

**How Does This Procedure Fit with the Governing Body’s Other Procedures?**

This procedure does not replace the Governing Body’s Complaints Procedure.

The whistle blowing procedure is about concerns regarding the public interest. If you are concerned about an issue relating to your personal position at work, you should use the Grievance procedure or another Human Resources procedure.

**The Process**: **Who Do I Tell?**

**If you work in a school**

You should approach the Head Teacher. If you feel unable to do so or you are concerned about something serious, you can approach the Chair of Governors, Director of Learning and Children’s Services, Chief Executive, or the Assistant Director of Finance - Audit. You can raise a concern by talking to someone or writing to them

**If you work for an agency or are a temporary worker**

You should raise any concerns with your line manager. If you feel unable to do so or you are concerned about something serious, you should approach the Headteacher but if you feel unable to do so or, you are concerned about something serious, you may approach the Chair of Governors, Director of Learning and Children’s Services, Chief Executive, or the Assistant Director of Finance - Audit. You can raise a concern by talking to someone or writing to them.

* Achieving for Children’s Monitoring Officer, Fiona Thomsen, Head of Shared Legal Services on 020 8545 3897.
* Joint Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management Alix Wilson on 020 8891 7291.
* Achieving for Children Director of Children’s Services,Ian Dodds on 020 8831 6116.
* If your concerns involve potential fraud or criminal activities contact the Fraud Line on 0800 389 9795.

**If you work for a company that has a contract with the School**

You should raise any concerns with the Head of Strategic Services, telephone 020 8547 5175. But if you feel unable to do so or you are concerned about something serious, you may approach the Assistant Director of Finance – Audit, telephone 020 8547 5660. You can raise a concern by talking to someone or by writing to them.

3

**Is There Any Support Available For Me?**

You can get the support of a staff representative, who may accompany you when raising a concern. Remember that by speaking up, it is not up to you to prove your concerns. However, you should be prepared to give the background and the reasons why you feel particularly troubled.

**What Happens Next?**

We will look into your concern to see what should happen. This may involve:

* An internal investigation;
* An external auditor;
* An independent inquiry;
* The police.

We will normally write to you within 10 working days of receiving your concerns. We will list them, tell you who is handling the matter, how you can contact them and whether we need your further help. We will also tell you where to get support if you need it.

**What Happens In An Internal Investigation?**

If there is an internal investigation, a special investigations team will be set up. This team is responsible for gathering all relevant information and meeting with all relevant staff. The team may interview a number of staff.

When they have finished their investigation, they must produce a report on their findings. The report is then considered by senior management. Based on the findings, management will then decide what further action to take. This may include disciplinary action for anyone involved in any wrongdoing.

On the other hand, if the investigation finds that the concerns raised or allegations made by the person who has ‘blown the whistle’ are malicious, frivolous, or for personal gain, disciplinary action will be taken against them.

Depending on any legal restrictions on giving you information, we will let you know the outcome of any investigation.

**Will I Be Involved In An Investigation?**

You may not want us to let people know that you have raised a concern. If we can investigate and resolve your concern without involving you, the Governing Body will not involve you further. If we are not able to resolve the problem without telling someone else who you are, we will always talk to you first.

The Governing Body encourages you to tell us who you are whenever possible as anonymous concerns are more difficult to investigate and the Governing Body cannot protect your position or give you any feedback if we don’t know who you are.

**Will I Get Into Trouble? And Will Anyone Find Out That I Have ‘Blown the Whistle’?**

The Governing Body does not allow the harassment or victimisation of anyone who raises a genuine concern. Harassment may result in disciplinary action.

There may be a situation where you want to tell us of your concern and not let anyone else know that you have. If we are not able to resolve the problem without telling someone else who you are, we will always talk to you first.

**Where Can I Get Independent Advice About Raising A Concern?**

You can talk to:

* Your union;
* An independent legal advisor;
* The Independent Charity, Public Concern at Work, telephone number: 020 7404 6609. Their lawyers can give you free confidential advice on how to raise a concern about serious wrongdoing at work.

**What Is the Public Interest Disclosure Act?**

The Public Interest Disclosure Act provides workers with protection from dismissal or other damage as a result of making a disclosure of information in the public interest about wrongdoing at work. Such disclosures are protected if they are done according to the Act's provisions. Disclosures may be made to the employer, prescribed regulatory bodies or on a wider basis to the Police. The Act's protection is strongest where workers raise matters with their employers.

**Telling Other People Confidential Information**

Giving out information about third parties to whom the Governing Body owes a duty of confidence may not be protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act. This may lead to disciplinary action. If you are in any doubt you should seek advice from your manager, union, lawyer or Public Concern at Work (020 7404 6609).

**Where can I find out more?**

You can find out more information on the Council’s Whistleblowing Policy on the Council’s Intranet site or the Council’s Internet site – <http://www.kingston.gov.uk/>

**Achieving for Children – Whistle Blowing Policy** <http://www.proceduresonline.com/achievingforchildren/pdfs/whistleblowing.pdf>

**Who Is Responsible For This Policy?**

The Governing Body and the Resources Committee

5

Approved by the Governing Body:

Signed ……………………………………………… Chair of Governors

Signed ……………………………………………… Headteacher

Date …………………………………………………

6