WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Loving God - Serving others - Flourishing together

RESPECT – ASPIRE – REJOICE

Approved by:	Full Governors	**Date:** 17 September 2026
Next review due by:	September 2027	

*"**Encourage one another and build each other up.**"*

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

VISION AND VALUES

Our vision is applied across all policies and guides our work: **Loving God - Serving others - Flourishing together**. Our school values are extremely important in supporting and guiding us in our actions and interactions with others. Our school values are verbs. They are things we do to help us live out our vision, to: **Respect, Aspire, Rejoice.**

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy is designed to enable employees or other members of the School to raise concerns or disclose information at a higher level which the individual believes shows malpractice.

A number of policies and procedures are already in place including Allegation of Abuse against Staff, Complaints Policy and Procedure, School Discipline Procedure and Rules. This policy is intended to cover concerns which are in the public interest and may (at least initially) be investigated separately but might then lead to the using of such procedures.

PURPOSE

Our school is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with this commitment, the school encourages employees with serious concerns about the school's work to come forward and voice those concerns. This also applies to concerns about the activities of staff, Governors and external organisations in their dealings with the school.

Members of staff may be the first to spot anything that is seriously wrong within the school. However, they might not say anything because they think this would be disloyal, or they might be worried that their suspicions are not justified. They may also be worried that they or someone else may be victimised. Members of the public (for example, parents of students) may also share some of these concerns.

We are committed to being open, honest and accountable and this policy aims to make sure that if you want to raise any concern, you can do so with confidence and without having to worry about being victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged in any way as a result**.**

WHAT TYPES OF ACTION ARE COVERED BY THIS POLICY?

The policy is intended to deal with serious or sensitive concerns about wrongdoings such as the following:

- Fraud and corruption
- Children or students being mistreated
- Unauthorised use of public money
- An unlawful act
- Any danger to health and safety
- The environment being damaged (for example, by pollution)
- A person abusing their position or any unauthorised use of their position for personal gain
- A person deliberately not keeping to a Council/school policy, an official code of practice, any law or regulation, or any procedures agreed by the local authority or governing body
- A person failing to meet appropriate professional standards

- A person being discriminated against because of their race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, sex, sexuality, class or home life
- Misuse of technology (as outlined in the Online Safety Policy)

TO WHOM DOES THIS POLICY APPLY?

This policy applies to all staff working in schools and educational establishments as well as contractors working on school premises (for example, agency staff, builders and drivers). It also covers suppliers and people who provide services to the school.

These procedures build upon our complaints procedure and other reporting procedures applying to various departments. The Headteacher and other senior managers are responsible for making all relevant people aware of these procedures.

WHAT IS NOT COVERED?

You cannot use this policy to deal with serious or sensitive matters that are covered by other procedures. Such procedures include the following.

- Staff's complaints about their employment. These complaints are dealt with through our Problems and Complaints Procedure.
- Parents or Customers complaints about our services. These complaints are dealt with through our Complaints Procedure.

PROTECTING YOU

If your allegation is true, you have nothing to fear, but we understand that deciding to blow the whistle is not easy. If you raise a concern which you believe is true, we will take appropriate action under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 to protect you from any harassment, victimisation or bullying.

We will keep your concerns confidential if this is what you want. In this case we will not reveal your name or position without your permission or unless we have to do so by law. We would explain this at the time you raise a concern so you can decide whether or not to proceed.

If you work for the school, you should also know that any allegation you make will not influence, or be influenced by, any unrelated disciplinary action against you or any redundancy procedures that may affect you.

ANONYMOUS ALLEGATIONS

Because we will protect you (as explained above), we encourage you to give your name when you make an allegation. Concerns raised anonymously tend to be far less effective and if, for example, we do not have enough information, we may not be able to investigate the matter at all.

UNTURE ALLEGATIONS

If you make an allegation which you believe is true, but it is not confirmed by our investigation, we will not take any action against you. However, if you make an allegation which you know is untrue, we will take appropriate disciplinary or legal action against you.

HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN

You should first raise your concern, in writing, with your immediate supervisor, your manager, the Chair of Governors or a member of the senior leadership team; this will depend on the

seriousness and sensitivity of the matter and who is suspected of the wrongdoing. If the relevant manager cannot deal with the matter, they will refer the concern to the Chair of Governors or the BST board.

HELP FOR YOU

You may want to discuss your concern with a friend or colleague. You may then find it easier to raise a concern if others share the same experiences or concerns.

If you work for the school, your trade union representative can give you general support and advice, or act for you if this would help. We will encourage the trade unions to support any member of staff who raises a concern with them.

HOW WE RESPOND TO YOUR CONCERNS

The way we deal with the concern will depend on what it involves.
We will first make enquiries to decide whether we should carry out an investigation and, if so, how we should go about it. Throughout all our enquiries and any investigation, our main concern will be to put the interests of the public first.

Your concern may be investigated by senior management, our internal auditors, or through the disciplinary process, or we may refer it to:

- the police;
- other agencies (for example, if it involves the abuse of children or vulnerable adults it may be referred to the Executive Director of Health and Social Care);
- our external auditor; or
- an independent investigator.

If your concern or allegation can be handled under any other procedure or policy, we will pass it on to the relevant person and let you know.

We may be able to settle some concerns without carrying out an investigation but by taking action agreed by you. If we need to take urgent action, we will do this before carrying out any investigation.

Within 10 working days of you raising a concern, the officer dealing with the matter will:

- acknowledge that we have received your concern;
- explain how we will handle the matter; and
- tell you what support is available to you.

It is difficult to set further timescales as they depend on the nature of the allegation and the type of investigation that needs to be carried out.

The amount of contact you have with the investigating officer will depend on the nature of your concern, the potential difficulties involved, and how clear the information you have given is.

If you need to have a meeting, you can be accompanied by a friend or a representative from a trade union or professional association. Meetings with the person investigating the matter will normally take place in their office but can be arranged elsewhere, but not in your home unless there are exceptional circumstances.

We will take steps to reduce any difficulties you may experience as a result of raising a concern. For instance, if you need to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings, we will arrange for you to get advice on the procedure.

We will usually give you feedback on the progress and outcome of any investigation. Details of any concerns raised will be kept confidential (unless they are found to be malicious and lead to disciplinary procedures) but will not be placed on your personal file.

HOW YOU CAN TAKE A MATTER FURTHER?

We hope you will be satisfied with any action we take. If you're not, and you want to take the matter outside the school, you could contact:

- the Chair of Governors who will convene the appropriate committee;
- our external auditor;
- the Audit Commission;
- your local Citizens' Advice Bureau;
- relevant professional bodies or regulatory organisations;
- a relevant voluntary organisation;
- the police.

If you take the matter outside the school, take care not to reveal any confidential information.

INDEPENDENT ADVICE

You can get independent advice or support from an independent charity called Protect. Their address is:

The Green House
244-254 Cambridge Heath Road
London E2 9DA
Advice line: https://protect-advice.org.uk/contact-protect-advice-line/
Website: https://protect-advice.org.uk/advice-line/

REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The Board of Governors through its Resources Committee review this policy every 3 years. It may however review this policy earlier than this if the government produces new regulations, or if it receives recommendations on how this policy might be improved.