



Saint Joseph's
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Whistleblowing Policy

Version 2.4 March 2023

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
CHURCH ROAD
LAVERSTOCK
SALISBURY
SP1 1QY

Success Criteria:

Context/Aim:

St Joseph's school governors are committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity, and accountability. This whistleblowing policy and procedure supports this commitment

Monitoring Procedures:

By Whom: Staffing Governors Committee	When: Biennially	How: Reports to the Staffing Governors Committee
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Evaluation:

By Whom: Head teacher and the nominated Whistleblowing Governor	When: Biennially	How: Staffing Governors Committee to review Policy
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Revision History:

<u>Version</u>	<u>Approved and Ratified</u>	<u>Review Date</u>	<u>Additional notes</u>
V2.4	March 2023	March 2025	No change
V2.3	March 2021	March 2023	Named governors added
V2.2	January 2019	January 2021	GDPR update
V2.1	January 2017	January 2019	Minor additions to policies referenced
V2	October 2014	October 2015	-
V1.3	July 2011	July 2012	-
V1.2	May 2010	May 2011	-
V1.1	April 2009	April 2010	-
V1	February 2007	February 2008	-

Key Personnel:

Head teacher
Whistleblowing Governor (John Hawkins)

Vision Statement:

St Joseph's is a co-educational, 11-16 Catholic voluntary-aided school in the diocese of Clifton and the county of Wiltshire. Our aim is to provide a caring educational environment where each person is valued and is given the dignity due to a child of God.

At the heart of our school is the Christian vision of the human person. We want each member of our community to grow as an individual witness to the gospel values of love, truth and justice. We want each pupil to be healthy in mind, body and spirit.

Each member of our community should feel safe and secure in the learning environment. We aim to develop a sense of self-discipline and responsibility in our pupils. Everyone in our community should show respect for themselves, respect for others and respect for the environment.

We believe that each pupil should have the opportunity to enjoy and achieve to their full potential. We are committed to praising and celebrating achievement. We want our pupils to have high expectations of themselves to understand the value of service to others and our responsibility as stewards of the environment. Everyone has a contribution to make in helping to build the common good. We aim to equip our pupils with the ability to make good choices in their lives based on the positive relationships and values they have learned in St Joseph's.

We aim to help each of our pupils to develop morally and spiritually. We want them to achieve economic well-being while being mindful of the needs of others who are less fortunate.
We are committed to aspiring for excellence in all that we do for the sake of the Gospel.

Head teacher

Other SJCS Policies that relate to this Policy:

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Staff Code of Conduct
Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
Disciplinary Procedure

Scope

It gives employees and others with genuine concerns about malpractice or wrongdoing in the school or council a way to voice those concerns without fear of victimisation.

Often it is those closest to an organisation who realise that there is something wrong. Sometimes people are reluctant to act upon their concerns because they think that they are being disloyal, or because they are afraid that they might be victimised if they speak up.

There are existing procedures in place (e.g. Grievance, and Dignity at Work Policies) which make provision for employees to lodge a concern relating to their own employment. This whistleblowing policy is intended to complement those procedures by covering concerns that appear to fall outside their scope. This concern may be about something that is:

- Unlawful, including financial or fraudulent malpractice such as embezzlement, bribery, corruption, dishonesty, etc.
- Against establishment standards of practice
- Improper conduct.

Concerns or allegations which fall within the scope of specific procedures, e.g. child protection or financial irregularities will normally be referred for consideration under those procedures.

The Local Authority will not accept liability for any actions, claims, costs or expenses arising out of a school's decision not to follow this policy where it is found that the school's Governing Body has been negligent or has acted in an unfair or discriminatory manner.

Definitions

A 'nominated governor' is the governor identified by the governing body as the first point of contact for whistleblowing queries. The nominated governor could be the Chair of Governors or another governor (but not a staff governor).

Aims

The purpose of this policy is to provide you with the help and support you need to speak up and be confident that you can do so safely. We will take your concerns seriously and ensure that they are dealt with promptly and fairly.

How to raise a concern

School:	St Joseph's Catholic School
Named internal contact:	John Hawkins
Preferred external contact:	Paul Hooper

Initial concerns should be raised with the nominated governor. If the employee believes that this governor is implicated, then the employee should approach the Chair of Governors if they are not the nominated governor. If the Chair of governors is the nominated governor, then they should approach the Vice Chair of Governors.

Within 48 hours, the nominated governor will contact you to arrange to meet you to discuss your concerns. Before the meeting, it would be helpful if you write down what you consider the problem to be, giving names, dates, and places where possible. If there are any other documents that you think might be helpful, please try to bring these with you. You are advised to take a friend, colleague, or school professional association / union representative with you to the meeting with the governor.

You are encouraged to raise your concern in person, or through your professional association / union representative on your behalf, because concerns that are expressed anonymously are difficult to investigate. However, the school will exercise its discretion in deciding whether to investigate an anonymous allegation. The factors taken into account will include:

- the seriousness of the issues raised;
- the credibility of the allegation; and
- the likelihood of being able to confirm the allegation from attributable sources.

How we will respond

After the initial meeting, the nominated governor will arrange for discreet initial enquiries to be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and if so, what form it should take.

The nominated governor will write to you within 10 days of your initial meeting to:

- acknowledge that your concern has been received
- outline our understanding of what the issues are; and
- indicate how we propose to deal with the matter.

If the nominated governor decides that it is appropriate for an investigation to be carried out, this will either be done by them, or by a governor who is asked to investigate – the investigating officer. However, it may sometimes be necessary for a concern to be referred to the police, an external auditor, or for it to be the subject of an independent enquiry. In addition, where it is established that the complaint involves issues of bullying or unlawful discrimination, it will be necessary to involve the school's Human Resources provider.

If an investigation is carried out, you will always be informed of the final outcome. It might not be possible to give you full details of the outcome if it contains personal details of a third party, because we have a duty to protect personal information under the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2016.

How will the school treat whistle blowers?

If you make an allegation in good faith but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If you knowingly make malicious allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

Disciplinary action will be taken against any member of staff who tries to stop another employee from raising a concern or who is responsible for any act of recrimination or victimisation against an employee who raises a concern.

Where an employee may have been party themselves to an act of possible gross misconduct on which they are now 'blowing the whistle' this could be considered in mitigation. They are not, however, exempt from disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action may be taken against employees if they contact the media with concerns about conduct at work without first following the steps set out in this policy.

The Governing Body will make every effort to protect an employee's identity when s/he raises a concern and does not want her/his name to be disclosed. It must be appreciated however, that the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by the employee may be required as part of the evidence.

If you raise a concern, you will be given the opportunity to feed back any issues or problems you may have experienced as a result. The purpose of this is to ensure that employees who have raised concerns in good faith do not suffer as a result.

Queries

If you have any queries about this policy, please contact the Head teacher and / or Chair of Governors.