

Whistleblowing Policy

The Governing Body has adopted
The Meridian School Whistleblowing Policy.

Date adopted by the Governing Body: 13.11.2013

Chair of Governors: Paul Bolton (Vice Chair)

Date of Review: November 2015

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Meridian School expects the highest standards of conduct from all employees, and will treat seriously any concern that an employee may have about illegal or improper conduct.
- 1.2 Employees will be expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the Headteacher any serious impropriety or breach of procedure.
- 1.3 Employees who do not follow the steps identified in this procedure or other agreed internal procedures, and take their concerns to other outside sources (e.g. the press), may be subject to a formal disciplinary investigation.
- 1.4 This procedure has been introduced in consultation with the trade unions and professional associations.

2 WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROCEDURE?

- 2.1 This procedure is designed to enable employees to notify the Headteacher (but see 4.1) of any reasonable suspicion of illegal or improper conduct. Where the concerns are about safeguarding children or young people, the school's Designated Senior Person for Child Protection should be notified (see 7 below).
- 2.2 It is a procedure in which the Headteacher will be expected to act swiftly and constructively in the investigation of any concerns in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedure.
- 2.3 Concern about a colleague's professional capability should not be dealt with using this procedure (but see section 7 below).

3 WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

- 3.1 This procedure is not designed to replace or be used as an alternative to the grievance procedure, which should be used where an employee is only aggrieved about his/her own situation.

Employees who are worried about wrong doing at work do not necessarily have a personal grievance.

- 3.2 Employees must act in good faith and must have reasonable grounds for believing the information to be accurate.
- 3.3 No employee who uses this procedure in good faith will be penalised for doing so. The school will not tolerate harassment and/or victimisation of any employee raising concerns.
- 3.4 An employee who is not sure whether the conduct he/she is concerned about does constitute illegal or improper conduct or is unsure about how to proceed can contact any of the names listed in section 8 for advice.
- 3.5 Financial regulations require any employee who suspects fraud, corruption or other financial irregularity to ensure this is reported to Internal Audit for possible

investigation. Normally you must first report any suspicion of such an irregularity to the Headteacher (but see 4.1), who will in turn report it to Internal Audit. Similar principles apply to Academies where the funding agency must be informed.

4 MECHANISM FOR RAISING CONCERNS

- 4.1 Where the issue concerns your Headteacher or, having made your report, you believe he/she has failed to take appropriate action, then you should bring it to the attention of the Chair of Governors.
- 4.2 Employees who feel unable to follow this route, for whatever reason, have the option of contacting one of the names listed in section 8.
- 4.3 Depending on the nature of the concern the complainant will be asked to justify and support their claim. Normally the complainant will be asked to do this in writing. It will, therefore, be helpful to note down any facts and dates as they happen.
- 4.4 Employees who want to use the procedure but feel uneasy about it may wish to consult their trade union initially and bring a friend or trade union representative along to any discussions, so long as the third party is independent of the issue.
- 4.5 Where anonymity is requested efforts will be made to meet the request where appropriate but that might not always be possible. The earlier and more open the expression of concern the easier it will be to take appropriate action.
- 4.6 Each case will be investigated thoroughly with the aim of informing the complainant of the outcome of any investigation as quickly as possible.

5 WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IF AN ISSUE IS RAISED WITH A MEMBER OF STAFF?

- 5.1 If a member of staff (other than the Headteacher) is approached by a colleague on a matter of concern as defined in this document, he/she should be advised to take the matter to the Headteacher (but see 4.1).

6 EXAMPLES OF ILLEGAL AND/OR IMPROPER CONDUCT

- fraudulent or improper use of the school's money or assets
- dangerous practices at work
- corruptly receiving any gift or advantage, thus failing to comply with the Bribery Act 2010 (see Model Anti Bribery Policy for Schools available on the Grid).
- allowing private interests to override the interests of the school.

7 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 7.1 All employees have a duty to report concerns about the safety and welfare of pupils/students
- 7.2 Concerns about any of the following should be reported to the school's Designated Senior Person for Child Protection (DSP):
- physical abuse of a pupil/student
 - sexual abuse of a pupil/student
 - emotional abuse of a pupil/student
 - neglect of a pupil/student
 - an intimate or improper relationship between an adult and a pupil/student

The school's DSP is Miss Kim Horner.

- 7.3 The reason for the concern may be the actions of a colleague (including a more senior colleague), a governor, another pupil/student or someone outside the school. Whatever the reason, concerns must be reported.

8 NAMES TO CONTACT (see 3.4 and 4.2)

HERTS HR

Assistant Director HR:
Tel:

Louise Tibbert
01992 556653

LEGAL, MEMBER & STATUTORY SERVICES

Chief Legal Officer:
Tel:

Kathryn Pettitt
01992 555527

COUNTY INTERNAL AUDIT

Head of Assurance Services:
Tel:

Helen Maneuf
01438 845502

STANDARDS & SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

Lead Officer Schools' HR Advice:
Tel:

Roy Hardcastle
01438 843789

Or any of the following trade union and professional association representatives:

UNISON Mr Keith Price/ Mr Brian Ruggles
The Flats
County Hall
Hertford
SG12 8DN
Tel: 01992 556260

NASUWT Mr C Surrey
31 Horn Hill

Whitwell
Herts, SG4 8AZ
Tel: 07725 704487

ATL Mr A Hathway
30 Webb Close
Letchworth
Herts
SG6 2TY
07823 888613

NAHT Mr R Woodhouse
Essendon CE Primary School
School Lane
Essendon
AL9 6HD

**VOICE
(formerly
PAT)** Mr D Colligan
2 St James Court
Friar Gate
Derby
DE1 1BT
Tel: 01384 349211

ASCL Ms T Nickson
Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School
Woods Avenue
Hatfield
Herts
AL10 8NL
Tel: 01707 275331

Ms A Saunders
Simon Balle School
Mangrove Road
Hertford
Herts
SG13 8AY
Tel: 01992 410400

NUT Mr F Breheny
131 Ashcroft Road
Stopsley
Luton
LU2 9AY
Tel: 07549 251497