



Whistleblowing Policy

School staff are protected, like all other employees, from being victimised by employers if they reveal any wrong doing or malpractice in the school. (**Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998**)

All school staff are covered, including part-time and temporary staff, supply teachers, peripatetic workers and visitors to the school, such as student teachers and social workers.

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES POLICY

Rationale

The Cavendish School aims to be a good employer and is committed to high standards of scrutiny and good practice in employer/employee relations.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects employees from any victimisation by employers if they reveal any wrong-doing in the workplace, and fear that they might be victimised in so doing. This policy is designed to ensure that employees can follow simple procedures, and to reassure everyone in the school that their concerns will be taken seriously.

Responsibilities

The Head has overall responsibility for the procedures and for ensuring that:

- appropriate procedures are in place,
- they are implemented;
- any concerns and any action taken are reported to the governing body; and
- all staff are aware of their rights and duties under the Act.

Rights

Any worker at the school is entitled, without any fear of reprisal, to disclose any action which he/she reasonably considers:

- potentially or actually unlawful, or
- involves a miscarriage of justice, or
- compromises an individual's health and safety;

- might cause environmental damage, or
- contravenes any school policy, or
- might be considered improper, or
- falls below the normal standards of conduct in the school
- or any concealment of such action.

This right is guaranteed by the Senior Manager Team, so long as the individual has acted in good faith.

Duties

The member of staff must:

- act in good faith when making such a disclosure; and
- must not commit a criminal offence in so doing; or
- disclose such confidential information to any person outside the school (except the LADO or his/her representative); and
- not expect any personal gain from making the revelation.

Complaints Procedures

Members of staff should consider whether the school's grievance or complaints procedure should be followed in the first instance.

Any disclosure of a lack of probity during these procedures is protected by the whistleblowing legislation, and the senior management team guarantee.

Confidential Reporting

In addition, any member of staff who has a reasonable concern about the probity of any action taken in the school can also choose to follow the 'confidential reporting route'.

In the first instance, he/she should take the matter up in confidence with the Head, or, if the concern is about any action taken by the Head, with the Managing Director, or, if the concern is about any action taken by Managing Director, with Local Authority Designated Officer for Southwark (LADO).

The Head, must attempt to resolve the matter with the member of staff within a reasonable time, and in any case must report progress to the member of staff within ten days of the making of the complaint.

If the member of staff is not satisfied with the Head's response to the complaint, or the time being taken to resolve it, the member of staff may take the matter up formally and promptly with the Managing Director.

The School must appoint no fewer than three of its members to consider the formal complaint, and to attempt a resolution within ten working days of receiving the complaint. The school may choose to have one non-school

member on the panel.

If the member of staff is still not satisfied he/she can formally take the matter to the Managing Director.

Victimisation

At all times Cavendish School guarantees the member of staff will be protected from any reprisals or victimisation.

However, any member of staff taking such a course must not make malicious or vexatious allegations which are shown to be untrue. In such circumstances the member of staff's conduct could lead to disciplinary action.

Monitoring and Review

The Head will report all complaints of this nature to the next governing body meeting, without revealing the name of the complainant or any unnecessary details. The Head will report on the nature of any complaint and the action taken, and the resolution of it. Cavendish School will review the workings of the procedures from time to time.

Cavendish School

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