



Our Lady of Lourdes
Catholic Multi-Academy

Whistleblowing Policy Incorporating Grievance Procedure

Introduction

The staff and Academy Representatives of St Bede's Catholic Middle School seek to run all aspects of school business and activity with full regard for high standards of conduct and integrity. In the event that members of school staff, parents, Academy Representatives or the school community at large become aware of activities which give cause for concern, St. Bede's School has established the following Whistleblowing Policy:

- a) to allow concerns to be raised confidentially
- b) to allow for a thorough investigation of the concern being raised so that appropriate action can be taken when deemed necessary.

Throughout this policy, the term *whistleblower* denotes the person raising the concern or making the complaint. It is not meant in a pejorative sense and is entirely consistent with the terminology used by Lord Nolan as recommended in the *Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life: Local Spending Bodies* published in May 1996. It also reflects the legal protection afforded by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1999 and the Worcestershire County Council confidential Whistleblowing Policy.

St Bede's School is committed to tackling any form of malpractice and treats any such issue seriously. St Bede's School recognises that some concerns may be extremely sensitive. It has therefore developed a system which allows for the confidential raising of concerns within the school environment but also has recourse to an external party outside the management structure of the school.

St Bede's School is committed to creating a climate of trust and openness so that a person who has a genuine concern or suspicion can raise the matter with full confidence that the matter will be appropriately considered and resolved.

When might the Whistleblowing Policy apply?

The type of activity or behaviour which St Bede's School considers could be dealt with under its Whistleblowing Policy includes:

- Any criminal activity
- Fraud or deceit
- The unauthorized use of public funds

Signature: Chair of Academy Representatives	Name:	Date:
Signature: Principal	Name:	Date:
Signature: Chair of Personnel Committee	Name:	Date:

Whistleblowing Policy

- Abuse of position
- Serious breaches of school procedures which may advantage a particular party (for example tampering with tender documentation, failure to register a personal interest)
- Deliberately falsifying school records
- Assisting in or condoning cheating
- Decision-making for personal gain
- Endangering the health and safety of students or other employees
- Sexual or physical abuse of students
- Deliberate concealment of malpractice
- Other unethical conduct

This list is not exhaustive.

Untrue Allegations

If you make an allegation in good faith, but the evidence produced during the investigation does not substantiate it, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you are an employee or statutory office holder and you make an allegation maliciously or for personal gain, this may result in disciplinary action being taken against you. Advice would be taken from WCC Human Resources if a malicious allegation was made.

What action should the *whistleblower* take?

St Bede's School encourages the *whistleblower* to raise the matter internally in the first instance to allow those school staff and Academy Representatives in positions of responsibility and authority the opportunity to right the alleged wrong and give an explanation for the behaviour or activity.

St Bede's School has designated a number of individuals to deal specifically with such matters and the *whistleblower* is invited to decide which of those individuals would be the most appropriate person to deal with the matter.

Name & Position

Mr Lloyd Roberts – Principal

Mr Tom Haycock – Chair of Academy Representatives

The *whistleblower* may prefer to raise the matter in person, by telephone or in written form marked private and confidential and addressed to one of the above named individuals. Wherever possible St Bede's School seeks to respect the confidentiality and anonymity of the *whistleblower* and will as far as possible protect him/her from reprisals. St Bede's School will not tolerate any attempt to victimise the *whistleblower* or attempts to prevent concerns being raised and will consider any necessary disciplinary or corrective action appropriate to the circumstances.

Alternatively if the *whistleblower* considers the matter too serious or sensitive to raise within the internal environment of the school, the matter should be directed to one of the following (as appropriate)

Whistleblowing Policy

Education Human Resources Worcestershire County Council County Hall Spetchley Road Worcester WR5 2NP Tel: 01905 763763	Father Marcus Stock Diocesan Schools Commission 61 Coventry Road Coleshill Birmingham B46 3EA Tel: 01675 430230 Fax: 01675 430231 Email: bdsc@bdsc.org.uk
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In addition information and advice can be obtained from the charity Public Concern at Work. This charity offers free legal advice in certain circumstances to people concerned about serious malpractice at work. Their literature states that matters are handled in strict confidence and without obligation. Contact details for the charity are as follows:

Public Concern at Work
Suite 301
16 Baldwins Gardens
London
EC1N 7RJ
Tel: 020 7404 6609
Fax: 020 7404 6576
whistle@pcaw.co.uk
helpline@pcaw.co.uk
services@pcaw.co.uk

Grievance Procedure

Introduction

These procedures are intended to promote fairness and order in the relationships between the Academy Representatives and the employees of the school, including, with the necessary modifications, the Principal.

The main objective is to settle individual grievances speedily and as close as possible to the point of origin.

Scope

These procedures are to be used in all cases where individual employees have a grievance within the jurisdiction of the school either with:-

- other employees
- the Principal
- the Academy Representatives

Exclusions

Matters covered by other procedures (eg discipline) are excluded.

Employees' Grievances

Whistleblowing Policy

Employees' grievances can arise from a variety of sources. They can be of a relatively simple nature or of fundamental importance.

Every effort should be made to resolve a grievance informally without recourse to a formal procedure.

However, where the informal approach is not appropriate or has failed, a formal procedure is set out as follows.

Any question or procedure not explicitly covered in this document shall be referred back to the Academy Representatives for determination.

Formal Procedure

Stage One

Where the matter has not been resolved informally, the employee concerned should submit a formal written notice of grievance to the Principal and, where appropriate, to the other employee(s) concerned. The Principal shall then respond, in writing, within seven working days.

Stage Two

If the employee is not satisfied with the Principal's response, or if the Principal fails to respond, then the employee may refer the matter to the Academy Representatives by writing to the Principal within seven working days of the Principal's response or the deadline for response if none received. The Principal shall then notify the Chair of the Personnel Committee within fourteen working days. All relevant documents shall be submitted to the members of the committee and the parties concerned at least five working days in advance of the hearing. The parties shall also be allowed to supplement their submissions personally, accompanied, if they so wish, by a friend (who may be a trade union or other representative).

The Committee should seek to resolve the matter. A copy of the written decision should be sent to all parties within five working days of the hearing.

The matter will end at this point except where it is agreed between all parties that an important matter of principle arises. The matter will then be referred to the Appeals Committee, whose decision will be final.

NB

Stage One does not apply if the aggrieved employee is the Principal or Vice Principal.