



St Francis Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Whistleblowing Policy

Drawn up by

Administrator

February 2015

Ratified by

Governors

Version No	Date	Change/Review
V1.0	March 2015	Policy Adopted
	January 2017	Agreed
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Introduction

The staff and Governors of St Francis Primary School run all aspects of school business and activity with an expectation of high standards of conduct and integrity.

In the event that members of the school staff, parents, Governors or the school community become aware of activities which give cause for concern, St Francis School has developed the following 'whistleblowing policy', which acts as a framework to allow concerns to be raised confidentially and provides for a thorough and appropriate investigation of the matter to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion for all parties.

Throughout this policy, the term 'whistleblower' refers to a person raising a concern or complaint and has no negative connotations.

St Francis School is committed to tackling fraud and other forms of malpractice and treats these issues seriously. Some concerns may be extremely sensitive and a system has been developed which allows for the confidential raising of issues within the school environment but also has recourse to a party external to the management structure of the school.

St Francis School nurtures a culture of trust and openness so that a person with a genuine suspicion or concern can raise the matter with full confidence that it will be appropriately considered and resolved.

The provisions of this policy apply to matters of suspected fraud and impropriety and not matters of a more general nature which would be handled under the school's Grievance or Complaints procedures.

When would the Whistleblowing Policy apply?

The type of activity covered by this policy includes

- Manipulation of accounting records and finances
- Inappropriate use of school assets or funds
- Decision-making for personal gain
- Any criminal activity
- Abuse of position
- Fraud and deceit
- Serious breaches of school procedures which may advantage a particular party such as tampering with tender documentation or failure to register a personal interest

What should the whistleblower do?

St Francis School encourages the whistleblower to raise a concern internally in the first instance, to allow Senior Management or Governors to remedy the situation and give a full explanation for the activity or behaviour.

The whistleblower will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and the result of any action taken. Depending on the nature of the allegation or concern, and whether or not it has been substantiated, the matter will be reported to the School Governing body and Swindon Borough Council.

If the whistleblower is not satisfied with the conduct of the investigation or with the outcome and resolution, this should be raised with the investigating officer, the Governing body and/or directed to the Local Authority.

Respecting Confidentiality

Whenever possible, St Francis School will respect the confidentiality and anonymity of the whistleblower and will as far as is possible protect him/her from reprisals.

St Francis School will not accept any attempt to victimise the whistleblower or attempts to prevent concerns being raised or investigated thoroughly. Disciplinary or corrective action will be considered in these circumstances.

Raising unfounded malicious concerns

Individuals are encouraged to come forward with genuine concerns in good faith, with the knowledge that they will be taken seriously. If malicious and baseless concerns are raised, this will also be taken seriously and may constitute a disciplinary offence or require some other form of penalty appropriate to the circumstances.

Conclusion

Existing good practice within St Francis C of E Primary School relating to internal systems of control, both financial and non-financial, as well as the external regulatory environment within which the school operates, ensure that cases of suspected fraud or impropriety rarely occur.

This whistleblowing policy is provided as a reference document to establish a framework for raising issues confidentially both internally and if necessary, outside of the management structure of the school.

This document is a public commitment that concerns will be taken seriously and will be actioned.