

KINGSMEAD SCHOOL HOYLAKE TRUST LIMITED
Including Boarding and Early Years Foundation Stage

Whistleblowing

The School has adopted this policy and the accompanying procedure on whistleblowing to enable members of staff to raise concerns internally and in a confidential fashion about fraud, malpractice, health and safety, criminal offences, miscarriages of justice, and failure to comply with legal obligations or unethical conduct. The policy also provides if necessary, for such concerns to be raised outside the organisation.

Elements of the Policy

In accordance with Lord Nolan's Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, the School's policy on whistleblowing is intended to demonstrate that the School :-

- will not tolerate malpractice;
- respects the confidentiality of staff raising concerns and will provide procedures to maintain confidentiality so far as is consistent with progressing the issues effectively;
- will provide the opportunity to raise concerns outside of the normal line management structure where this is appropriate;
- will invoke the School's disciplinary policy and procedure in the case of false, malicious, vexatious or frivolous allegations;
- will provide a clear and simple procedure for raising concerns, which is accessible to all members of staff.

This procedure is separate from the School's adopted procedures regarding grievances. Employees should not use the whistleblowing procedure to raise grievances about their personal employment situation.

This procedure is to enable members of staff to express a legitimate concern regarding suspected malpractice within the School.

Malpractice is not easily defined; however, it includes allegations of fraud, financial irregularities, corruption, bribery, dishonesty, acting contrary to the staff code of ethics, criminal activities, failure to comply with a legal obligation, miscarriages of justice, or creating or ignoring a serious risk to health, safety or the environment.

Confidentiality

Employees who wish to raise a concern under this procedure are entitled to have the matter treated confidentially and their name will not be disclosed to the alleged perpetrator of malpractice without their consent. It may be appropriate, in order to preserve confidentiality, that concerns are raised orally rather than in writing, although members of staff are encouraged to express their concern in writing wherever possible. If there is evidence of criminal activity then the Police will in all cases be informed.

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The Procedure

A member of staff may express their concern to the Headmaster, Senior Master or the Bursar.

Any concern raised will be investigated thoroughly and in a timely manner, and appropriate corrective action will be pursued. The member of staff making the allegation will be kept informed of progress and, whenever possible and, subject to third party rights, will be informed of the resolution.

A member of staff who is not satisfied that their concern is being properly dealt with will have a right to raise it in confidence with the Governors by putting their concern in writing addressed to Chair of Governors, c/o Kingsmead School.

External Procedures

It should be noted that under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, there are circumstances where a member of staff may be entitled to raise a concern directly with an external body where the employee reasonably believes that:-

- exceptionally serious circumstances justify it;
- the School would conceal or destroy the relevant evidence;
- they would be victimised by the School;
- the Secretary of State has ordered it.

Malicious Accusations

False, malicious, vexatious or frivolous accusations will be dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.

Protection from Reprisal or Victimisation

No member of staff will suffer a detriment or be disciplined for raising a genuine and legitimate concern, providing that they do so in good faith and following the Whistleblower procedures.

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