Growing and Achieving Excellence, Inspired by Faith

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Whistleblowing Policy

Approved:	**Autumn 2025**
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Signed: (Headteacher)	**Lorraine Flower**
Signed: (Governor)	**Maxime Yao**

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Introduction

The governors of St Joseph's School are committed to developing and delivering a high quality of service and having the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability. All levels of managers have a particular responsibility to prevent malpractice at work and to take steps to identify and remedy it if it occurs. All employees have an important contribution to make to this process. The governors recognise that staff may feel reluctant to come forward to raise concerns – to "blow the whistle" – for a range of reasons.

However, everyone has a responsibility to be alert to and to speak up about any serious concerns they may hold about malpractice on the part of others. The purpose of the simple procedure which follows is to provide a framework within which employees can feel confident both in voicing genuinely held concerns about malpractice without fear of recrimination and in the governors' commitment to investigating and taking firm management action where malpractice may be substantiated.

Application

The procedure applies to all employees.

Scope

The procedure is intended to cover concerns which affect colleagues, pupils, parents or Governors themselves. The concerns could include:

- Conduct which is an offence or breach of law
- Miscarriages of justice
- Risks of health and safety
- Damage to the environment
- Unauthorised use of public funds
- Possible fraud and corruption
- Abuse of others
- Unethical conduct

Relationship with other procedures

This procedure is in addition to complaints procedure and grievance procedure.

Procedure for reporting concerns at work Normally
you should approach your Headteacher.
If, for any reason you feel unable to do so, or depending on the seriousness of your concern, you may approach the Chair of Governors either via email or by sending a letter to the school office, labelled "For the Attention of the Chair of Governors".

How should I raise my concerns?

You may raise your concerns verbally or in writing. You may seek the support of a staff representative who may accompany you when raising a concern. By speaking up, you are not responsible for proving your concerns. However, you should be prepared to give background information as to why you felt particularly troubled.

How will the Governors handle the matter?

Once you have raised your concern, the governors will look into it to assess what action, if any, should be taken. This may involve an internal investigation or referral to the external auditor, form the subject of an

independent inquiry or referral to the police. Normally within 10 working days of you raising the concern, the governors will write to you summarising your concerns, tell you who is handling the matter, how you can contact them and whether your assistance may be needed. You will also be told of other support mechanisms which may be available to you. Subject to legal constraints, you will be informed of the outcome of any investigation.

Independent Advice

If you are in any doubt about making a disclosure, you could talk to your union or an independent legal advisor. You may also wish to contact Protect - Speak up to Stop Harm (https://protect-advice.org.uk/ , a charity working in this arehttps://protect-advice.org.uk/contact-protect-advice-line/ Their lawyers can give you free confidential advice at any stage about how to raise a concern about serious malpractice at work.

What about confidentiality?

The governors will not accept harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern and such conduct may result in appropriate disciplinary action being taken. However, they recognise that there may be a situation where you wish to raise a concern in confidence under this policy. If you ask the governors to keep your identity confidential, they will not disclose it without your consent. If the situation arises where they are not able to resolve the concern without disclosing your identity, they will discuss with you whether or how to proceed.

How can the matter be taken further?

The aim of this procedure is to provide you with a mechanism to raise your concerns in a structured and supportive environment and to reassure you that your concerns will be addressed seriously, promptly and thoroughly. The governors would encourage all staff to use the procedure. If you are not satisfied with the action taken and if you feel it is right to take the matter beyond the Governors, the following are possible contacts:

- The Diocesan Bishop www.rcsouthwark.co.uk archbishop@rcsouthwark.co.uk 02079282495
- The Audit Commission www.audit-commission.gov.uk
- External Audit (Guildhall 2 at Royal Borough of Kingston)
- Health and Safety Executive 03000031747 www.hse.gov.uk see online advice form
- Information Commissioner's Office 03031231113 www.ico.gov.uk

Malicious Allegations

The governors expect that in raising concerns under this procedure, staff will be acting in good faith. Accordingly, if on enquiry, employees are found to have been mistaken and concerns are not confirmed, no action will be taken. However, should it be established in any case that concerns have been raised or allegations made maliciously, frivolously or for personal gain, disciplinary action will be taken.

Public Interest Disclosure Act

The procedure is intended to support the Public Interest Disclosure Act which provides workers with protection from dismissal or other detriment as a result of making a disclosure of information in the public interest about malpractice at work. Such disclosures are protected if they are done in accordance with the Act's provisions. Subject to these provisions, disclosures may be made to the employer, prescribed regulatory bodies or on a wider basis e.g.: the police. The Act's protection is strongest where workers raise matters with their employers.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher, on behalf of the Chair of Governors, has overall responsibility for overseeing the operation of this procedure.