

Appendix 6:



Whistleblowing Policy

The following policy should be read in conjunction with Kimbolton School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy – the overarching policy which includes the Anti Bullying Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and the Safer Recruitment Policy.

This policy sets out the way in which staff can and should report suspected or actual wrongdoing, dangers or risks in relation to the School's activities. This includes bribery, fraud, other criminal activity, miscarriages of justice, health and safety risks, damage to the environment and any breach of legal or professional obligations. It also includes concerns about a member of staff or volunteer in relation to safeguarding matters. This procedure applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors and agency workers at the School. It is non-contractual and may be amended at any time.

All staff are encouraged to inform the Headmaster directly with their concerns. They should contact him in person. If the Headmaster is not immediately available, staff should speak to the Senior Deputy Head (who is responsible for the School in the Headmaster's absence) and/or the Assistant Head DSL. Should a member of staff wish to make an allegation against the Headmaster, they should contact the Chair of Governors (via the Clerk to the Governors 01480 862222).

However as stated in KCSIE 2023 and the School's Low Level Concerns Procedure, low level concerns can be raised with the DSL. The DSL will follow guidance given by the Local Authority and discuss with the Senior Deputy Head and / or the Headmaster.

The Aim of this Procedure is to

- Provide a system to raise concerns and/or to pass on disclosures made by a child about another member of staff or volunteer in relation to safeguarding.
- Provide a system for staff to raise concerns about other matters of the types listed above.
- Enable the School to look into such concerns.
- Allow members of staff to take matters further if they are dissatisfied with the School's response; and
- Reassure members of staff that they will be protected from reprisals or detriment for 'whistleblowing' in good faith.

Non-safeguarding concerns

The School hopes that where staff have concerns that do not relate to safeguarding matters, they will be able to raise them with their Head of Department/line manager. If, for some

reason, this is not appropriate, concerns should be raised in the first instance with a member of the SLT (or SMT at the Prep School).

The School will usually arrange a confidential meeting with the member of staff who has raised the concern as soon as possible to discuss the matter.

Safeguarding concerns

The procedure for raising an allegation of or concern about abuse by a member of staff (including supply and volunteers) is set out in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and such concerns will be dealt with as set out in the policy. This includes allegations / concerns that do not meet the threshold (i.e. Staff Code of Conduct infringement).

Protection

The School aims to encourage openness and supports staff who raise genuine concerns under this policy even if they turn out to be mistaken. In making such disclosures, the member of staff will be afforded protection from any detrimental treatment in the event that such disclosure is made:

- In good faith;
- If it is believed by the member of staff that the disclosure is substantially true;
- If the member of staff has not acted maliciously; and/or
- If the disclosure is not for personal gain.

Confidentiality

Completely anonymous disclosures are very difficult to investigate. Staff are therefore encouraged to raise their concerns openly. The School will however do its best to protect the identity of a member of staff who decides to make a disclosure in accordance with this procedure and does not want their name to be revealed. If a consequent investigation is initiated however, it may be necessary to reveal the source of the information and the member of staff may be asked to provide a relevant statement.

How staff and volunteers should respond to requests for confidentiality from pupils raising concerns about abuse is dealt with in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Where an allegation is made anonymously by a pupil, every effort will be made to investigate the source of the allegation and to verify its credibility. In these circumstances, other members of the SLT or Pastoral Middle Leaders may be involved.

Untrue Allegations

If a member of staff or pupil makes an allegation which is made in good faith, but is not confirmed by an investigation, no action shall be taken against them. If, however, the allegation is considered to have been malicious or vexatious, then disciplinary action may be taken.

Records

A note of the concern raised, how it was resolved, and copies of any records associated with the investigation will be stored confidentially following resolution.

Further Recourse

This procedure is intended to provide members of staff with a way in which to raise concerns within the School and for them to be investigated and remedied internally. In most cases, there will be no need for the matter to be referred externally (other than where this is appropriate as part of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).

Having said this, if a member of staff is not satisfied with the way in which a concern they have raised is handled, they may make a disclosure to a prescribed person, such as Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Social Services, notwithstanding the result of the internal investigation or the NSPCC general advice line.

If a member of staff chooses to take the matter outside the School, they will need to ensure that he/she will not disclose confidential information which is not relevant to the case; in this regard the member of staff should first check with the Headmaster. Staff in this situation may wish to consider taking advice, for example from a trade union.

Should any deficiencies or weaknesses in the School's safeguarding/child protection or whistleblowing arrangements come to light, these will, of course, be remedied without delay.

Reviewed: September 2023
Headmaster