

# Woodfield School

# 2016



## Whistle Blowing Policy



**Woodfield School**

Title of Policy: ***Whistle Blowing***

Status: *draft version 2016*

Person responsible:	<i>Desi Lodge Patch</i>
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## Whistle Blowing Policy

The Governing Body of Woodfield School is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity (honesty and decency) and accountability. Accordingly, arrangements have been put in place, which are designed to offer protection to anyone who reports anything s/he considers to be “wrong” in the conduct of Head teacher, Governors, or members of the school’s teaching, administrative and support staff, which might not or would not come to light if normal reporting lines were the only route available for making concerns known.

The Governing Body considers that where possible such concerns should be raised within the school to enable confidential disclosure to be made to the Head teacher or Chair of Governors in any individual case.

### **For the Staff Member**

#### a. The Procedure

The Whistle Blowing Policy aims to:

- encourage you to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice;
- provide avenues for you to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken;
- ensure that you receive a response to your concerns where this does not prejudice other proceedings; and
- reassure you that you will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if you have a reasonable belief that you have made any disclosure in good faith.

The Procedure covers inappropriate conduct, which is:

- a danger to health and safety;
- criminal (i.e. a criminal offence of any type, not just theft and fraud);
- unlawful (i.e. breach of any legal obligation, including those under statute, common law and administrative law);

- damaging to the environment;
- a miscarriage of justice;
- a breach of any applicable Code of Practice, policy or procedure;
- a breach of proper accounting practices; or
- a concealing of information tending to show any of the above matters.

Any serious concerns you have about any aspect of the conduct of any members of staff, a governor, or any other acting on behalf of the school can be reported under the Whistle Blowing Policy

Should you wish to make a confidential disclosure to the Head teacher, or if for any reason this would be inappropriate, to the Chair of the Governing Body, you should arrange to meet him/her or write (marking your letter confidential). You should make it clear in the letter or at the meeting that you are using this Whistle Blowing Policy

The Head teacher, or Chair of Governors, will then investigate the matter you have raised if it is appropriate for this procedure. This will seek to establish the facts of the matter and assess whether the concern has foundation and can be resolved internally. S/he will interview you and investigate the matter further as appropriate and will keep you informed and advise you of when the investigation is likely to be concluded. Records will be kept of work undertaken throughout the investigation. The whistle blower will be informed of the results of the investigation and the action to address the matter. The matter will be reported to the Governing Board.

If the whistle blower is dissatisfied with the conduct of the investigation or resolution of the matter or has a genuine concerns that the matter has not been handled appropriately the concerns should be directed to the next appropriate authority eg The Chair of Governors if the Headteacher has investigated.

If for any reason it is not appropriate for you to raise the matter with the Head teacher or the Chair of Governors, you may instead make your disclosure to any of the following;

The DFE  
Your Trade Union  
Your local Citizens Advice Bureau  
Relevant professional bodies or regulatory organisations  
The School legal advisor- Brent LA  
The schools auditor- Landau Baker  
The police  
Aisha Bello- Safeguarding Governor

If the matter is taken outside school, you should ensure that you do not disclose confidential information.

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

**b. Taking advice**

You may ask for advice/guidance on how to pursue matters of concern, for example from:

- The Head teacher
- The Chair of the Governing Body
- Union Representative
- Brent Legal
- School Assistance Programme

If at any time after making your referral you feel you have been, are being or are likely to be victimised, dismissed, made redundant, or made to suffer some other detriment as a result of using this procedure you should report your concerns to your trade union or another appropriate body.

Woodfield School seeks to respect confidentiality and anonymity of the 'whistle blower' and will as far as possible protect him or her from reprisals.

The whistle blowing policy is a framework in which issues can be raised confidentially internally and if necessary outside the management structure of the school. This document is a public commitment that concerns are taken seriously and fully investigated.

**For the Head teacher or Chair of Governors**

This note sets out key steps to be taken if you receive a report from a member of staff who states he/she is relying on the Whistle Blowing Policy.

1. Make a written record of the report if it has been made orally.
2. Allocate a number to the report and set up a confidential file for the report and all papers received or generated in respect of it.
3. Consider whether the complaint is of a nature to be dealt with under the Procedure or is in truth, for example, a grievance and should be dealt with on that basis.
4. Consider whether you need any professional support to investigate the report or should refer it externally.
5. Inform the member of staff of the number allocated and how you intend to proceed.
6. Carry out an investigation, including interviewing the member of staff making the report if you have not already done so. This person should sign a written statement giving details of the complaint. The investigation should include interviewing and taking signed statements from any witnesses or affected third parties.
7. Seek professional advice as required, referring the report externally if appropriate, normally after discussion with the member of staff making the report.
8. Prepare a report.

If action is required, take appropriate action where that is within your power or refer the report to an appropriate authority

Matters not covered by this procedure:

- allegations arising from reported harm to children (including physical and sexual abuse) and matters of concern about the care or service given to children will be dealt with under Child Protection Procedures.
- where the member of staff is aggrieved about her/his own situation and the matter is more appropriately dealt with under the Grievance Procedure.