



*'Growing, loving and learning,
in the arms of Mary.'*

Whistleblowing Policy

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BACKGROUND

The United Kingdom public sector maintains high standards of openness, honesty, integrity and accountability. Sunderland City Council and the governing body share these standards and are committed to maintaining high standards.

As part of this commitment the council and the governing body are committed to combating any acts of impropriety wherever they may arise in relation to any of the council's or school's activities or services. In achieving this aim, the council and the governing body have put in place arrangements to ensure high standards are maintained and that any act of impropriety is prevented or is detected at an early stage.

The Council and the governing body realise, however, that, despite their best efforts, impropriety (e.g. unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, conducting activity which may present a danger to the public employees or the environment) can be discovered by chance.

It is often thought the alertness of not only their workers but members of the public, other authorities or agencies, service users, partners or suppliers/contractors etc. that impropriety is detected. Consequently, the council and the governing body acknowledge the important role that these parties, including the local community, have to play in helping the council and the governing body to maintain high standards and are keen to involve them in its arrangements for the detection of acts of impropriety.

COMMITMENT

The school's governing body is committed to the principle that where any person, i.e. worker, governor, member of the public or any other external body, becomes aware of, or has concerns about, activity in the school which appears to fall below its high standards of honesty, integrity, openness and accountability, they should be reported promptly to the school or another appropriate body.

As part of this commitment the governing body acknowledges the need to encourage any person who believes that there may be something seriously wrong within the school or who may have concerns about any aspect of the school's work to come forward and voice those concerns. The governing body is committed to creating and maintaining a culture whereby any individual who seeks to express concerns and suspicions may do so with confidence, without fear of repercussion or intimidation and in the knowledge that the information will be treated confidentially and will be investigated fully and rigorously.

IMPLEMENTATION

The governing body is committed to establishing and maintaining effective reporting arrangements to ensure that, where an individual, whether an employee, governor or any member of the public, has serious concerns regarding the conduct of any aspect of the school's business, they can do so through a variety of avenues, promptly and in a straightforward way.

The framework in place to ensure the aims of this policy are met are set out in two 'Whistleblowing Policy arrangements' documents, one for school appointed workers and one for members of the 'public.'

AWARENESS

The council and the governing body will seek to ensure that its policy and arrangements for 'Confidential Reporting' are widely publicised both internally and externally to the school.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

This is available from the City Council's Internal Audit Service, City Treasurer's Department, Civic Centre, Sunderland SR2 7DN (Tel: 0191 5612327)

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The governing body is committed to ensuring that this policy is fully implemented. The governors will monitor this policy as part of the annual monitoring programme adopted by the governing body.

