

HEVINGHAM AND MARSHAM PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Whistle-blowing Policy

Don't think "what if I'm wrong – think "what if I'm right?"

1 Policy Rationale

- 1.1 We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children and encouraging an open and supportive culture. This policy explains the procedures that anyone must follow within the school if he or she has concerns as to the actions of any adult causing harm to pupils.

2 Principles

- 2.1 We all have a duty to protect children from harm.
- 2.2 Adults working in a school are likely to be the first to realise that behaviour of another adult is causing, or is likely to cause, harm to a child.
- 2.3 Each person has the responsibility to raise their concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour so as to protect or reduce the risks to others, prevent the problem worsening and protect other staff and the school.
- 2.4 It is recognised that the decision to report a concern as to another's practice or behaviour is a difficult one to make. Harassment or victimisation will not, however, be tolerated and we will take all possible measures to protect anyone who in good faith raises their concern.
- 2.5 Even when a concern raised in good faith is subsequently found to be unproven, no action will be taken against the person who first reported the concern.
- 2.6 Only where it is concluded that the concerns raised have been raised maliciously will there be any possibility of disciplinary action against the person who improperly and maliciously raised the concern.
- 2.7 We recognise that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. The school in conjunction with **Education Personnel** will offer advice and support; however staff may also wish to contact and receive assistance from their trade union.

3 Barriers to whistle blowing

- 3.1 This policy aims to address the following;
- fear of being wrong
 - fear of reprisal

- fear of escalation
- fear of damage to career
- fear of not being believed

4 Procedures

- 4.1 Concerns, suspicions or uneasiness should be raised as soon as the person with the concern is aware of malpractice or as soon as the person is sufficiently worried as to the actions of another without necessarily having absolute proof of the wrongdoing.
- 4.2 The concerns are to be reported to the immediate manager, the Headteacher or the Designated Person for Child Protection. The person making the report must be satisfied with the response he or she receives.
- 4.3 Pinpoint what your concerns are. Ideally, these should be put in writing. The report, written or verbal, should set out the background and history of the person's concerns, giving names, dates and places where possible, and reason for concern. It will not be necessary to prove the truth of the allegations but the person should be in the position to explain the cause of their concern.
- 4.4 Concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be exerted to maintain anonymity, if wished. However, at the appropriate time, the person may be needed to provide evidence.
- 4.5 In all cases of allegation/concern the Headteacher will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on **01603 223473. (This is the direct line to Grace Cheese, Child Protection Officer).**
- 4.6 If the allegation/concern is against the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors must be informed immediately but will then also contact the LADO.
- 4.7 All allegations or concerns must be discussed with the LADO within 1 working day. The Headteacher or Chair of Governors must NOT begin any investigation prior to this discussion.
- 4.8 You will be given information on the nature and progress of any queries and supported, as necessary.

5 Self-Reporting

- 5.1 It is recognised that staff may experience difficulties, such as physical or mental ill health or personal problems, which could impinge on their professional competence.
- 5.2 Staff should report such difficulties to their manager so that professional and personal support can be offered. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where the difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

6 Associated Policies

6.1 The policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Single Equality Policy

7 Monitoring and Review

7.1 This policy will be kept under regular review and may be modified from time to time, after appropriate consultation.

7.2 This policy will be adopted in October 2008. Reviewed in June 2014 and as required.

Policy approved by the Governing Body of Hevingham and Marsham Primary Schools.

Signed **Chair, Staff/Pupil Committee**

Dated

