

HOLY TRINITY C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL.

RAISING CONCERNS AT WORK (WHISTLE BLOWING) POLICY.

AIM.

To assist in the creation of an environment in which staff and others feel they are able to raise concerns in an expeditious and appropriate way, without being worried about possible victimisation and/or harassment as a result of doing so.

SCOPE

The policy is designed to address situations where employees have concerns about activities that:

- ❑ Are unlawful
- ❑ Represent a risk to health and safety
- ❑ Cause environmental damage
- ❑ Infringe equal opportunities-related legislation
- ❑ Breach school policies
- ❑ Amount to improper conduct

PROCEDURE

Employees should raise a concern in the first instance with their immediate manager, if possible. Similarly, non-employees should raise a concern in the first instance with the appropriate class teacher.

In some cases, the nature or sensitivity of the concern means that this may not always be appropriate. If an individual feels that they are unable to raise their concern with their immediate management, then there are two further options:

- 1) the individual may approach the Chair of Governors, who will formally log the concern and with whom responsibility will rest for the action to be taken. The Chair of Governors will treat the information in confidence.

2) the individual may approach RBWM's Governor's Support Services.

In circumstances where an individual feels it is necessary to raise a concern with an independent body rather than raise it within the school or Borough then he/she may call the Audit Commission's Public Interest Disclosure Act Hotline on 0207 630 1019.

Concerns should ideally be raised in writing but can be made orally; in either case it is essential to give as much information as possible so that reasonable grounds for the concern can be demonstrated.

The earlier a concern is raised, the greater the opportunity for the school to take remedial action.

A Trade Union representative or work colleague may assist an individual in raising a concern and may accompany them at any related meetings.

THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE

Once a concern has been raised, the appropriate person (which in most cases would be the Head Teacher or the Chair of Governors) will make initial enquiries, taking advice where needed from the Borough. The person will determine whether an investigation is appropriate, and if so, what form it should take. As soon as possible, and in any case within 10 working days of the concern being reported, the person handling the matter will write to the individual raising the concern acknowledging that the concern has been raised and indicating how, as far as possible, it will be dealt with. The individual will be kept informed of progress and will receive a full and final response, subject to any legal restraints.

The school staff and governors will take all reasonable steps to minimise any difficulties to those raising concerns and provide advice and support should they be required.

SAFEGUARDS

Governors will not tolerate harassment or victimisation of the person raising the issue, and will take appropriate action in the event that anybody committing such harassing or carrying any form of reprisal.

Wherever possible governors and staff will protect the identity of those raising concerns if they do not wish their name to be disclosed.

If an allegation is made in good faith, but is not confirmed by investigation, then no action will be taken against the person raising the concern. However, if an allegation is made which later proves to be malicious or vexatious, then disciplinary action is likely to be taken.

This policy was developed with the Finance and Resources committee in autumn 2007 and reviewed in April 2008.

It will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis or when there are changes in the law as advised by R.B.W.M.

This Policy was approved by the Governing Body on: 20th May 2008