



## Danes Hill School Whistle Blowing Policy – Child Protection

### **THIS POLICY APPLIES TO THE MAIN SCHOOL, THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE AND THE PRE-PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

If a member of staff has a concern about another member of staff and is concerned for the safety or welfare of a child/children in the school, they must pass this concern on and they must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring such matters of concern to the attention of the headmaster. Where there are concerns about the headmaster, this should be referred to the chair of governors immediately, without informing the headmaster.

Should a member of staff feel unable to raise the issue with the head, another whistleblowing channels exists, which is to contact the Surrey LADO:  
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) contact number 0300 123 1650  
Also, NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline 0800 028 0285 (8am to 8pm)

During our regular three-yearly whole school child protection training for staff, reference will be made to the importance of whistleblowing and also to our whistleblowing policy. New staff will also receive a copy of the policy and it will be part of their safeguarding induction with the DSL.

An individual may be the first to recognise that something is not right but may not feel able to express their concerns out of a feeling of disloyalty to colleagues. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. It is often the most vulnerable child or young person who is targeted. These children need all staff to safeguard their welfare.

Staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding system.

#### **Reasons for whistle blowing**

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

#### **What stops people from whistle blowing**

- Starting a chain of events which spirals
- Disrupting the work or project
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

### How to raise a concern

- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken
- Try to pinpoint exactly what is concerning you and why
- Speak to the Headmaster immediately.
- Ideally, you should put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and giving names, dates and places where you can.
- A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

### What happens next?

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries.
- Your employer has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence.

### Self-reporting

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, **this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.**

"Absolutely without fail- challenge poor practice or performance. If you ignore or collude with poor practice it makes it harder to sound the alarm when things go wrong" (reproduced with acknowledgement to "Sounding the Alarm" – Barnardos).

*This policy was written for staff working with children and young people in education settings including maintained schools and is in line with Surrey Children's Service's "Staff Concerns and the Freedom to Express Them ("Whistleblowing")" SCC November 2002*

JCT

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