

Whistleblowing Policy

Whistle blowing Policy

Whistle blowing is defined as – “A person who in good faith reports significant concerns, allegations or suspicions of circumstances, situations or the behaviour of others which is likely to put a child's safety or welfare at risk.”

Aims of the Policy

- Staff and volunteers have the right, and a responsibility, to raise genuinely held concerns about abuses of power and trust by colleagues towards pupils.
- This policy is designed to ensure that genuinely held concerns are raised, and effectively addressed, by people working for The Llewellyn School on a paid and unpaid basis. This policy also covers other people who come into the school in an official role i.e., students on placement, Inspectors from outside agencies, external School Governors, volunteers & contractor
- In line with our Child Protection Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education says that all schools should have appropriate whistle-blowing procedures.
- A genuinely held concern might be about the following:
 - criminal activity
 - child protection and/or safeguarding concerns
 - miscarriages of justice
 - danger to health and safety
 - damage to the environment
 - failure to follow any legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements
 - financial fraud or mismanagement
 - negligence
 - breach of the school's internal policies and procedures including its Code of Conduct likely to damage the school's reputation
 - unauthorised disclosure of confidential information
 - the deliberate concealment of any of the above matters

No-one exercising their right to raise a concern in good faith under this Policy will be penalised for doing so. Any attempt to victimise staff, volunteers, and students for raising genuine concerns, or to prevent such concerns being raised, will be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

This policy does not:

- Replace the Grievance Procedure.
- Replace the Complaints Procedure.
- Replace the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Require staff, volunteers, or students to prove that their suspicions are well founded; however, they must have reasonable grounds for their suspicions.

Raising a whistleblowing concern

The school recognises that it is important for all staff to have a means by which they can raise serious concerns about any aspect of the operation of the Llewellyn School. The school further acknowledges its obligations under the Public Disclosure Act (1998) to ensure mechanisms are in place through which concerns relating to matters of public interest can be raised.

The Llewellyn School hopes that in many cases Staff will be able to raise any concerns with the School Leader unless it is about them, in this instance then this should be reported in the first instance to the Deputy Headteacher, HR Manager or the school governors. You may resolve this initially by speaking to them in person or putting the matter in writing via email (In any situation like this where a meeting is held a minute taker will be present).

They may be able to agree on a way of resolving a concern quickly and effectively. In some cases, they may refer the matter to the external School Governors.

Employees may raise concerns about the practice of anyone who works for or on behalf the school including all staff, including SLT members, CEO / School leader, school governors, volunteers, and contractors.

Concerns may be raised verbally with a second person present or in writing, including email this cannot be received via any messenger platforms. This includes the use of whistle blowing forms which are kept in the bathrooms on the back of the door and in the staff room within Llewellyn School.

A concern raised in writing should: Set out the background and history of the concern - giving names, dates, and places where possible. Give the reason the Staff member is particularly concerned about the situation.

For clarity it would be helpful for the staff member to say that they wish their concerns to be addressed under the whistleblowing procedure.

Investigation and outcome

Once a member of Staff has raised a concern, The Llewellyn School will carry out an initial assessment to decide the scope of any investigation. The Llewellyn School will inform the 'whistle-blower' of the outcome of its assessment. The member of staff raising the concern may have to attend added meetings to supply further information.

The Llewellyn School will aim to keep the member of staff informed of the progress of the investigation and its timescale. However, sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent The Llewellyn School from giving specific details of the investigation or any disciplinary action taken as a result. The member of staff must treat any information about the investigation as strictly confidential.

Whilst The Llewellyn School cannot always guarantee the outcome a particular member of staff is looking for, The Llewellyn School will try to deal with the concern fairly and in a suitable way. If a member of staff is not happy with the way in which his or her concern has been handled, he or she can raise it with one of the other key contacts outlined above.

External disclosures

The aim of this policy is to supply an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating, and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases Staff should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally unless this is a safeguarding concern which you would do collaboratively with the School Leader to enable her to take immediate action to remove the person at once.

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be right for Staff to report their concerns to an external body such as a regulator. It will very rarely if ever be proper to alert the media. We strongly encourage you seek advice from Llewellyn School's external School Governors, before reporting a concern to anyone external. Llewellyn Schools School Governors are in place to help and advise you. The independent whistleblowing charity, Public Concern at Work, runs a confidential helpline. They also have a list of prescribed regulators for reporting certain types of concern.

Whistleblowing concerns usually relate to the conduct of School Staff, but they may sometimes relate to the actions of a third party, such as a service provider. The law allows Staff to raise a concern in good faith with a third party, where the member of staff believes it relates to their actions or something that is legally their responsibility. However, Staff are encouraged to report such concerns internally first. Staff should contact one of the other individuals set out above for guidance for clarity this would be a member of SLT and the School Leader.

If in doubt staff can seek advice from Public Concern at Work, the independent whistleblowing charity, who offer a confidential helpline. Their contact details are:

Public Concern at Work (Independent whistleblowing charity)

Helpline: 020 7404 6609 E-mail: whistle@pcaw.co.uk Website: www.pcaw.co.uk

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicatedhelplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

Workers can also contact the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas) for guidance on whistleblowing and grievances. Useful information can be found at: www.acas.org.uk/grievances

People who contact another person to whistle blow other than the correct pathway must be prepared for their concerns to be taken further. No one can expect their concerns to be kept confidential, but they can be reassured that they will not be later victimised.

Whistle blowing is paramount for the safety and wellbeing of everyone.

Policy Reviewed by:	Suzy Hollett (HR Manager)
Date:	30/05/2022

Policy Verified by:	Sara Llewellyn (School Leader-CEO)
Date:	01/06/2022

Date for Next Review:	30/05/2023
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