

# WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

Presented to Finance & Resources Committee on Thursday 31 October 2013  
Ratified Board of Directors on 12 November 2013

THIS DOCUMENT TO BE REVIEWED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS

For: The Giffard Catholic Primary Academy  
SS Mary and John's Catholic Primary Academy  
St Michael's Catholic Primary Academy  
St Teresa's Catholic Primary Academy  
St Edmund's Catholic Academy



Date of Approval: 31/10/13

Date to be reviewed: October 2014

# **Bishop Cleary Catholic Multi Academy Company**

## **Whistle Blowing Policy**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Whistleblowing is an employee's disclosure of what they consider to be malpractice by a co-worker or manager. This malpractice may constitute any behaviour felt to be detrimental to the best interests of the Academy, its stakeholders and its employees. Specific examples of issues covered by the Whistleblowing Policy include:
1. Any unlawful act.
  2. Health and safety issues.
  3. Damage to the environment.
  4. Unauthorised use of public funds.
  5. Fraud and corruption of any description.
  6. Inappropriate or improper conduct (including bullying or harassment).
  7. Serious failure to comply with appropriate professional standards.
  8. Breach of the Academy's Constitution or other policy or code of practice.
  9. Discrimination of any kind.
  10. Any form of unethical conduct.
- 1.2. The Academy's Whistleblowing Policy does not apply to raising grievances about an employee's personal situation. Any such concerns should be raised under the existing provisions for raising grievances.
- 1.3. Provided that you act in good faith, and that you have a reasonable suspicion that the alleged malpractice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur, you can disclose your concerns, using this procedure, and be protected by law from victimization or dismissal. The law in question is the Public Interest Disclosure Act, which came into force in 1999. Although not strictly required by the Act, the Academy's internal procedures give effect to it. The Academy believes that having internal procedures is in everyone's interest.

### **2. Aims of the Policy**

- 2.1. The aims of the Academy's Whistleblowing Policy are as follows:
1. Encourage employees to feel confident about raising concerns and to question and act on those concerns.
  2. Provide ways for employees to raise concerns and receive feedback on any action taken as a result.
  3. Reassure employees that if they raise concerns in good faith and reasonably believe them to be true, they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation.
  4. Ensure that employees are aware of options available to them if they are dissatisfied with the Academy's initial response.

### **3 Who is covered by the Policy?**

- 3.1 The Academy's Whistleblowing Policy applies equally to all of the following groups:
1. All employees (including part time and temporary staff)
  2. Agency staff working for the Academy

3. Contractors and suppliers
4. Organisations working with the Academy under partnership arrangements
5. Service users and stakeholders

#### **4 What assurance does the Whistleblowing Policy provide?**

- 4.1 Individuals raising concerns under the Whistleblowing Policy will not be at risk of any form of retribution or sanction, including losing their job or contract with the Academy, provided that:-
  1. The disclosure is made in good faith
  2. There is a genuine and reasonable belief that the information, and any allegations contained in it, is substantially true
  3. The disclosure is not motivated by personal gain
- 4.2 The Academy will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern. However, where matters which are known to be untrue are raised maliciously, it is likely that disciplinary action will be taken against perpetrators

#### **5. Making a Disclosure/Raising a Concern**

The Academy has established the following primary mechanisms for employees to report their concerns:-

To make a disclosure either telephone or write to the Contact Officer listed at the end of the policy. If writing, mark the envelope: 'Strictly Private and Confidential'. Do not e-mail Contact Officers, as e-mail is not a secure medium and must not be used.

The Contact Officer will acknowledge receipt of your disclosure in writing, within 5 working days. They will also gather further information if need be, including by personal interview, at which you can be accompanied by an official of your trade union or professional association, or by a fellow employee.

- 5.1 Lines of communication for reporting fraud include an employee's line manager, Head of Department/Curriculum Area, Business Director, Principal, Chair of Academy Committee and Chair of the Board of Directors.
- 5.2 Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing.
- 5.3 Whilst anonymous allegations will be considered and action taken where appropriate, it is much more difficult to properly investigate matters raised anonymously. The Whistleblowing Policy is designed to protect staff raising genuinely held concerns and individuals utilising the provisions of the policy are encouraged to identify themselves. Obviously, feedback relating to any investigation which has been undertaken can only be provided where contact details are known.

#### **6. Confidentiality**

The Academy will treat your disclosure in confidence and only reveal your identity if absolutely necessary (e.g. if required in connection with legal action).

#### **7. How will the Academy respond?**

7.1 The Academy's response will depend on the nature of the concern that has been raised. In all instances, the Academy will:

1. Record and acknowledge the issue raised and refer it for investigation within three days of receiving the information.
2. Respect confidentiality – The Academy will do its best to protect your identity when you raise a concern and do not want your name to be disclosed. It must be appreciated, however, that this is not always possible. The investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by you may be required as part of the evidence. The person investigating the matter will be informed of any confidentiality requirements relating to the disclosure.
3. Decide on appropriate action e.g. Audit Services investigation, other internal investigation, and referral to the police or other external organisation.
4. Subject to any legal constraints, the relevant employee will normally be informed of the final outcome of any investigation undertaken.

## **8. How can a concern be taken further?**

8.1 Where individuals are dissatisfied with action taken by the Academy in respect of issues raised under the Whistleblowing Policy, they should raise their concerns with The Chair of the Board of Directors. If they remain dissatisfied, the following organisations may be contacted for advice:

### **1. The Charity Public Concern at Work**

Public Concern at Work  
Suite 301  
16 Baldwin Gardens  
London  
EC1N 7RJ

Tel: 020 7404 6609

E:mail: [helpline@pcaw.co.uk](mailto:helpline@pcaw.co.uk)

### **2. The Audit Commission**

The Audit Commission  
1 Vincent Square  
London  
SW1P 2NP

Tel: 0207 828 1212

E:mail: [enquiries@audit-commission.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@audit-commission.gov.uk)

Confidential Public Interest Disclosure Line: 0845 052 2646

In addition, individuals have the option of taking advice from their trade union, the Citizens Advice Bureau, their own legal representation etc.

Contact Office: Accounting Officer

Ms Deirdre Finucane

Tel: 01902 558888

E:mail: [d.finucane@stedmunds.lplplus.net](mailto:d.finucane@stedmunds.lplplus.net)