



Joseph Swan Academy

Confidential Reporting Policy

(Whistleblowing Policy)

2018 - 2019

To be reviewed September 2019

Confidential Reporting

This policy is designed to give clear guidelines to employees as to how to share any concerns about wrong or unacceptable practice. It is not about telling tales on colleagues but aims to ensure that work is carried out honestly and well.

All concerns will be recorded and investigated promptly.

Concerns will, so far as is possible, remain confidential and those raising them will be treated fairly by the Academy.

Reports will be prepared, following investigation and appropriate action will be taken to resolve concerns.

1. The sorts of issues covered include:
 - (a) any unlawful act;
 - (b) breaches of Academy policy, codes of practice and acceptable standards of behaviour;
 - (c) misuse of assets;
 - (d) actions which could harm people;
 - (e) significant damage to property;
 - (f) abuses of position, power or authority;
 - (g) unfair discrimination, and
 - (h) other unethical conduct.
2. This policy meant to add to existing procedures (e.g. for dealing with grievances). It should only be used where employees reporting concerns feel that other procedures can not be used.
3. In many cases it is the Academy's employees who are best placed to know of any concerns about wrong or unacceptable practice. The earlier you express the concern the easier it is to take action.
4. Although you are not expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of a concern, you will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are reasonable grounds for your concern. The Academy recognises the potential vulnerability of employees who express concerns under this procedure and will not tolerate any attempt to harass or victimise such a person.
5. Where a concern is found to be malicious or has been made in bad faith, this will be regarded as a serious matter and could lead to disciplinary action.
6.
 - (a) Employees are encouraged to put their name to a concern whenever possible.
 - (b) Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful but will be considered at the discretion of the Academy.

- (c) In exercising this discretion the factors to be taken into account would include:
- the seriousness of the issues raised
 - the credibility of the concern, and
 - the likelihood of confirming the concern from attributable sources

Procedures

1. Line managers will normally be the first point of contact. They will be responsible for initiating investigations to concerns promptly. If employees feel that their line manager may be involved in the matter about which they are concerned, a more senior manager should be the person informed of the concern.
2. The person receiving the concern will:
 - a) record it;
 - b) ensure confidentiality, so far as may be possible;
 - c) investigate promptly and respond to the employee concerned;
 - d) report to the Head Teacher in the first instance;
 - e) recommend appropriate action to resolve the concern.
3. It is desirable for those raising concerns to give the person charged with investigating them all relevant facts and the reasons for concern.
4. Although employees are not expected to prove the truth of any allegation, they will need to demonstrate sufficient and genuine grounds for concern.

The Academy's Response

1. Initial enquiries will be made to decide what investigation will be appropriate. Concerns which come within the scope of existing procedures (e.g. child protection issues) will normally be considered under those procedures.
2. Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation.
3. Within 10 working days of a concern being received the Academy will, in writing
 - (a) acknowledge receipt of the concern;
 - (b) indicate how it proposes to deal with it;
 - (c) give an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response;
 - (d) state whether any inquiries have been made, and
 - (e) state whether any further investigations will take place, and if not, why not.
4. If necessary, further information will be sought from the person raising the concern.

5. If a meeting is arranged between the person responsible for dealing with the concern under this procedure and the employee raising it, then the employee has the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a friend who is not involved in the area of work to which the concern relates.
6. The Academy will confirm in writing to those raising concerns that they have been properly dealt with. Information about outcomes of investigations will be given unless this is not possible for legal reasons.