



Cundall Manor School

# Whistleblowing Policy

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Chair of Governors	Rachel Powell
Headmaster	Chris James-Roll
Business Manager	Laura Taylor

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### 1 Preamble & aims of this policy

- 1.1. We are committed to running the School with honesty and integrity, and we expect all staff to maintain high standards. However, all schools face the risk of things going wrong from time to time, or of unknowingly harbouring illegal or unethical conduct. A culture of openness and accountability is essential in order to prevent such situations occurring and to address them when they do occur. We expect employees, and others that we deal with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the school to come forward and voice those concerns.
- 1.2. The aims of this policy are:
  - 1.2.1. To encourage staff to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible, in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as appropriate, and that their confidentiality will be respected.
  - 1.2.2. To provide staff with guidance as to how to raise those concerns.
  - 1.2.3. To reassure staff that they should be able to raise genuine concerns without fear of reprisals, even if they turn out to be mistaken.
- 1.3. This policy covers all employees, officers, governors, consultants, contractors, casual workers, volunteers and agency workers and is in addition to the School's complaints procedures and other statutory reporting procedures.
- 1.4. The School has overall responsibility for this policy, including keeping it under review.
- 1.5. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.

### 2 What is whistleblowing?

- 2.1 Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which in the reasonable belief of the worker relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work, which is deemed to be in the public interest. This may include:
  - criminal activity;
  - failure to comply with any legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements;
  - miscarriages of justice;

- danger to health and safety;
- damage to the environment;
- sexual or physical abuse of pupils where referral under Child Protection Procedures is not appropriate;
- conduct which is likely to indicate radicalisation of staff, pupils or other stakeholders of the school.
- Endangering the Health and Safety of an individual or individuals;
- bribery;
- facilitating tax evasion;
- financial fraud or mismanagement;
- conduct likely to damage our reputation or financial wellbeing;
- corruption;
- unauthorised disclosure of confidential information;
- negligence;
- the deliberate concealment of any of the above matters.

2.2 A 'whistleblower' is a person who raises a genuine concern relating to any of the above. If you have any genuine concerns related to suspected wrongdoing or danger affecting any of our activities (a whistleblowing concern) you should report it under this policy using the prescribed form.

2.3 This policy should not be used for complaints relating to your own personal circumstances, such as the way you have been treated at work. In those cases you should use the Grievance Procedure.

2.4 If you are uncertain whether something is within the scope of this policy you should seek advice from the Headmaster or Business Manager, whose contact details are at the end of this policy.

2.5 Should the concern not meet the requirement to be a qualifying disclosure, you should raise this under the School's grievance policy. Where a concern is raised under the whistleblowing policy where it is not appropriate to do so, ie it relates to a personal grievance, the recipient will confirm that the matter will be addressed under the grievance policy.

### **3 Raising a whistleblowing concern**

3.1 In the first instance you should report any concerns you may have to your line manager or the Headmaster, where the concern relates to your line manager or it is not appropriate to make the report to your line manager. All concerns reported will be treated in the utmost confidence. The School has a form for you to report your concerns. You may be asked to confirm any verbal concerns in writing or to confirm a written record of a verbal report using the prescribed form.

3.2 We hope that in many cases you will be able to raise any concerns you have with your manager or a senior member of staff. They may be able to agree a way of resolving your concern quickly and effectively. In some cases, they may refer the matter to the Chair of Governors.

3.3 However, where the matter is more serious, or you feel that your manager or a senior member of staff has not addressed your concern, or you prefer not to raise it with them for any reason, you should contact one of the following:

- 3.3.1 The Chair of Governors;
- 3.3.2 The Headmaster; or
- 3.3.3 The Designated Safety Lead (DSL); or

Contact details are set out at the end of this policy.

- 3.4 Following receipt of a disclosure made under this policy, an initial assessment meeting will be held with the employee. The purpose of this meeting is to gather as much information as possible from the employee regarding their concerns, including whether they have any supporting evidence or can identify any witnesses. This meeting will be held as soon as practicable following receipt of the disclosure.
- 3.5 You may bring a colleague or union representative to any meetings under this policy. Your colleague or union representative must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation and a note taker will also be present.
- 3.6 We will take down a written summary of your concern and provide you with a copy after the meeting. We will also aim to give you an indication of how we propose to deal with the matter.

#### **4 Confidentiality**

- 4.1 We hope that staff will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. However, if you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret. If it is necessary for anyone investigating your concern to know your identity, we will discuss this with you, but will make reasonable attempts to protect your identity if this is your wish.
- 4.2 We do not encourage staff to make disclosures anonymously. Proper investigation may be more difficult or impossible if we cannot obtain further information from you. It is also more difficult to establish whether any allegations are credible. Whistleblowers who are concerned about possible reprisals if their identity is revealed should come forward to the Chair of Governors or one of the other contact points listed in paragraph 3.3 and appropriate measures can then be taken to preserve confidentiality. If you are in any doubt you can seek advice from Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work), the independent whistleblowing charity, who offer a confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

#### **5 Investigation and outcome**

- 5.1 Following an initial assessment meeting we will determine the scope of any investigation. We will inform you of the outcome of our assessment. You may be required to attend additional meetings in order to provide further information.
- 5.2 In some cases, we may commence a full investigation appoint an investigator or team of investigators including staff with relevant experience of investigations or specialist knowledge of the subject matter. The investigation will aim to gather all relevant information including relevant documentary evidence or witness statements.
- 5.3 We will aim to keep you informed of the progress of the investigation and its likely timescale. However, sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent us giving you specific details of the investigation or any disciplinary action taken as a result. You should treat any information about the investigation as confidential.

- 5.4 The investigator(s) may make recommendations for change to enable us to minimise the risk of future wrongdoing.
- 5.5 If we conclude after investigation that a whistleblower has made false allegations maliciously, the whistleblower may be subject to disciplinary action and may potentially be dismissed by reason of gross misconduct.
- 5.6 Once the investigation is completed, the investigation manager will write to the employee confirming the outcome.

## **6 If you are not satisfied**

- 6.1 If you are not satisfied with the explanation or outcome, you may raise the matter with the appropriate official organisation or regulatory body. Alternatively, employees may raise a formal complaint under the School's grievance policy.

## **7 External disclosures**

- 7.1 The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in school. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.
- 7.2 The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator. It will very rarely if ever be appropriate to alert the media. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external and you may wish to discuss matters with ACAS, your professional body or trade union. The independent whistleblowing charity, Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work), operates a confidential helpline. They also have a list of prescribed regulators for reporting certain types of concern. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.
- 7.3 Whistleblowing concerns usually relate to the conduct of staff, but they may sometimes relate to the actions of a third party, such as parents, Governors, volunteers, suppliers or service providers. In some circumstances the law will protect you if you raise the matter with the third party directly. However, we encourage you to report such concerns internally first. You should contact your manager or the Headmaster or one of the other individuals set out in paragraph 3.3 for guidance.

## **8 Protection and support for whistleblowers**

- 8.1 All employees who raise matters of concern under this policy are protected against detrimental treatment, up to and including dismissal, because they have made a disclosure.
- 8.2 Bullying, harassment or any other detrimental treatment afforded to a colleague who has made a qualifying disclosure is unacceptable. Anyone found to have acted in such a manner will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 8.3 A confidential support and counselling helpline is available to whistleblowers who raise concerns under this policy. Protect contact details are set out at the end of this policy.

## 9 Contacts

<b>Chair of Governors</b>	Rachel Powell, Chair of Governors E-mail: <a href="mailto:rachelpowell@cundallmanor.org.uk">rachelpowell@cundallmanor.org.uk</a>
<b>Headmaster</b>	Christopher James-Roll E-mail: <a href="mailto:chrisjames-roll@cundallmanor.org.uk">chrisjames-roll@cundallmanor.org.uk</a>
<b>Designated Safety Lead</b>	Clare Stovin Email: <a href="mailto:clarestovin@cundallmanor.org.uk">clarestovin@cundallmanor.org.uk</a>
<b>Business Manager</b>	Laura Taylor Email: <a href="mailto:laurataylor@cundallmanor.org.uk">laurataylor@cundallmanor.org.uk</a>
<b>Protect helpline</b> (Independent whistleblowing charity)	<b>020 3117 2520</b> E-mail: <a href="mailto:whistle@protect-advice.org.uk">whistle@protect-advice.org.uk</a> Website: <a href="https://protect-advice.org.uk/">https://protect-advice.org.uk/</a>

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## Cundall Manor School Whistleblowing Disclosure Form

If you are unsure whether your disclosure concerns a whistleblowing matter, please speak to Laura Taylor, Business Manager or refer to our whistleblowing policy for more information.

In some cases, a disclosure relating to a personal matter will be classed as a grievance. If this is the case, we will confirm that your concerns will be dealt with under our grievance policy.

Any individual who makes a whistleblowing disclosure will be protected against any detrimental treatment, up to and including a dismissal, on the basis that they have made this disclosure. If, however, the individual knowingly makes a false allegation, this may result in disciplinary action being taken.

**Employee name:**

**Job title:**

**Line manager:**

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which in the reasonable belief of the worker relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work, which is deemed to be in the public interest.

Please indicate what wrongdoing or danger your concern relates to:

- Criminal activity
- Failure to comply with any legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements
- Miscarriages of justice
- Danger to health and safety
- Damage to the environment
- Sexual or physical abuse of pupils where referral under Child Protection Procedures is not appropriate
- Conduct which is likely to indicate radicalisation of staff, pupils or other stakeholders of the school
- Endangering the Health and Safety of an individual or individuals
- Bribery
- Facilitating tax evasion
- Financial fraud or mismanagement
- Conduct likely to damage our reputation or financial wellbeing
- Corruption
- Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information
- Negligence
- Deliberate concealment of any of the above matters

**Please provide the names and job titles of any person your disclosure relates to:**

**Please provide full details of your concerns including details of any incidents, any relevant policies or documents, any previous action taken, etc:**

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**Please provide details of any witnesses to these matters:**

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**If you have a preferred outcome to this matter, please outline this below:**

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By signing this form, you confirm that you are making this disclosure in line with our whistleblowing policy and understand that this matter will be dealt with under this procedure.

<b>Signed:</b>	
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<b>Date:</b>	
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***For organisation use only:***

<b>Received by:</b>	
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<b>Date received:</b>	
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