

WHISTLE BLOWING

Statement of Practice

Date Drafted:	November 2020
Date Approved by Governors:	3 December 2020
Review Frequency:	Annually
To be Reviewed By:	Mrs L Reeve

Introduction

The staff and governors of The Long Eaton School (hereinafter called TLES) seek to run all aspects of school business and activity with full regard for high standards of conduct and integrity. In the event that members of school staff, parents, governors or the school community at large become aware of activities which give cause for concern, TLES has established the following code of practice which acts as a framework to allow concerns to be raised confidentially and provides for a thorough and appropriate investigation of the matter to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion. Throughout the policy the term “whistle blower” denotes the person raising the concern or making the complaint.

What is Whistle Blowing?

In May 1996, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, the *Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life: Local Public Spending Bodies* was published. One of its recommendations was that: -

“Local public spending bodies should institute codes of practice on whistle blowing, appropriate to their circumstances, which would enable concerns to be raised confidentially inside and, if necessary, outside the organisation.” (Recommendation 2, Second Report)

The Nolan Committee used the term 'whistle blowing' to mean the confidential raising of problems or concerns within an organisation or within an “independent review structure” associated with that organisation and not in the pejorative sense of leaking information or telling tales. In the case of a school the parent LEA would be regarded as the “independent review structure”, with the school being the organisation. It is important to draw distinction at this stage between matters of impropriety that follow the whistleblowing provisions (for example some sort of breach of law, school procedures or ethics) and matters of more general grievance, which would be dealt with under the staff grievance procedures.

When might the whistle-blowing policy apply?

The type of activity or behaviour that TLES considers should be dealt with under this policy includes:

- Manipulation of accounting records and finances
- Inappropriate use of school assets or funds
- Decision-making for personal gain
- Any criminal activity
- Abuse of position
- Fraud and deceit
- Serious breaches of school procedures which may advantage a particular party (for example tampering with tender documentation, failure to register a personal interest)

What action should the whistle-blower take?

TLES encourages the whistle blower to raise the matter internally in the first instance to allow those school staff and governors in positions of responsibility and authority the opportunity to right the wrong and give an explanation for the behaviour or activity.

TLES has designated a number of individuals to specifically deal with such matters and the whistle-blower is invited to decide which of those individuals would be the most appropriate person to deal with the matter:

Head – Mr R Peel

School Business Manager – Mrs L Reeve

Chair of Governors – Peter Griffin

The whistle-blower may prefer to raise the matter in person, by telephone or in written form marked private and confidential and addressed to one of the above-named individuals. All matters will be treated in strict confidence and anonymity will be respected wherever possible.

Alternatively if the whistle-blower considers the matter too serious or sensitive to raise within the internal environment of the school, the matter should be directed in the first instance to Smith Cooper – Audit Department who will then escalate the matter with the local authority

The local authority has its own procedures for dealing with such matters and will ensure every effort to respect the confidentiality of the whistle-blower. They will ensure relevant officers of the Department for Education are informed as appropriate.

In addition, information and advice can be obtained from the charity Public Concern at Work. This charity offers free legal advice in certain circumstances to people concerned about serious malpractice at work. Their literature states that matters are handled in strict confidence and without obligation. Contact details for the charity are as follows:

Telephone:

Protect Advice Line: 020 3117

2520 (* option 1)

Business Support: 020 3117 2520

(*option 2)

Fax

020 7403 8823

Email

Protect Advice line: whistle@protect-advice.org.uk

Media enquiries: press@protect-advice.org.uk

Business support services: business@protect-advice.org.uk

Address

The Green House

244-254 Cambridge Heath Road

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