

# **St Gildas' Catholic Junior School**



*“Through our actions we will try to live as Jesus lived.”*

## **Whistleblowing Policy**

**September 2017**

## **Introduction**

St Gildas' is a Catholic school, founded by and forming part of the Catholic Church. In addition to the Church's funds which established the school, it is also in receipt of public funds. This means that the school is accountable to both the Catholic community and to the public.

Whistleblowing is a procedure whereby employees disclose any wrong doings such as fraud, malpractice, breach of health and safety or any other illegal act by the management or any other employee

Under the Public Interests Disclosure Act, a worker has the right not to suffer detriment or be unfairly dismissed as a result of speaking out.

This policy applies to all employees of St Gildas' school, council staff, contractors, agency staff and trainees.

## **Aims and Scope of this policy**

This policy is intended to cover major concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures. These include:

- Conduct which is an offence, a breach of the law or country or contrary to Church teaching
- Disclosures related to miscarriages of justice
- Health and safety risks including risks to the public as well as other employees
- Damage to the environment
- The unauthorised use of public or Church funds
- Possible fraud or corruption
- Abuse of students
- Other unethical or immoral conduct

Any concerns that you have about any aspect of service provision or the conduct of employees or governors of the school or others acting on behalf of the school can be reported under this policy. This may be something that you feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards, your experience or values, beliefs and standards to which the school subscribes. Is against the school's trust deed or instrument of government or policies or falls below established standards of practice or amounts to improper conduct.

## **Safeguards**

The school will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation, including informal pressures, and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice will not influence you or be influenced by any disciplinary or redundancy procedures that might affect you.

### **Confidentiality**

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time however you may need to come forward as a witness. You also have a duty to observe this confidentiality.

### **Anonymous allegations**

You are encouraged to put your name to your allegation wherever possible. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful but will however be considered at the discretion of the school. The following factors will be taken into account:

- The seriousness of the issue raised
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources

### **Untrue Allegations**

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. However, if you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain disciplinary action may be taken against you.

### **How to raise a concern**

If you believe you have discovered serious malpractice within the school you should ideally raise these concerns with your line manager. If this is not appropriate then you should contact the headteacher directly.

An appropriate person will be designated as the investigating officer and you will be given the opportunity to discuss your concerns.

If you suspect the headteacher may be involved in the malpractice then you should contact the chair of governors. If you also suspect involvement from the chair you should contact the Diocesan Director of Education.

Within ten working days of your initial meeting, the investigating officer will write to confirm the details of your concern and inform you that an investigation will take place. You will be kept informed of progress and will normally be advised of the eventual outcome, subject to third party rights. All correspondence can be sent to your home address. Meetings can be arranged off site if you prefer and a union representative or friend may accompany you..

Records will need to be kept throughout the process however these will be of an anonymous nature.

There cannot be prescribed time limits on the investigation but it is in the interests of all parties for the matter to be resolved without delay.

If you have complaints about the way the investigation is being handled you should raise these with the designated investigating officer firstly. If your complaint is unresolved you should raise it with the Diocesan Director of Education.

On completion of the investigation a report will be presented to the governing body which will decide on the appropriate course of action. Subject to any legal constraints you will be informed of the action to be taken. If you do not agree with the outcome then you have seven days in which to make your concerns known to the governing body, via the chairperson. If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome you may consider contacting the Secretary of State who has the power to intervene if the governing body appears to be acting unreasonably. You should be aware however that this course of action can have serious implications for the school.

At no stage should you contact the media without the written permission of the chairperson of the Governing Body. Such action would be a breach of confidentiality and could result in disciplinary action against you.

## **Contacts**

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