



Merchant Taylors'
School

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Whistleblowing Policy

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Author: Director of People

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 Merchant Taylors' School encourages a free and open culture with all of its employees and anyone who engages with the School. In particular, the organisation recognises that effective and honest communication is essential if concerns about breaches or failures are to be effectively dealt with and the organisation's success ensured.
- 1.2 The aim of this policy is to encourage workers to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Any concerns raised under this policy will be treated seriously and dealt with confidentially. Any worker raising a genuine concern under this policy will not be treated less favourably for raising concerns outlined in this procedure, even if they are mistaken in their belief.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all those working in the organisation including employees, casual workers, volunteers, governors, agency/supply staff and trainees.

3. Whistleblowing at Work

- 3.1 Whistleblowing occurs where information is disclosed which is in the public interest and which indicates that a wrongdoing concerning the following is being, has been or is likely to be committed:

- Committing a criminal offence
- Failing to comply with a legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- Endangering the health & safety of an individual
- Environmental damage
- Financial fraud and malpractice
- Offering, giving or receiving bribes
- A deliberate breach of company policies
- Corruption
- Deliberate concealment of information relating to the above.

- 3.2 This procedure should not be used where the information you have regarding a wrongdoing relates to your own personal circumstances, such as the way you have been treated at work. The Grievance Procedure should be used in these type of cases.

4. No Detriment

- 4.1 Provided that this procedure is used correctly and you believe the truth of the facts you are reporting, you will not suffer any detriment as a result of reporting the wrongdoing. If you believe that you have suffered any such detriment, you should inform a member of the Executive Team. If the matter is not remedied, you should raise it formally using the Grievance Procedure.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1 We hope that employees will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. However, if you want to raise your concern confidentially, you should state this and we will make every effort to keep your identity secret and only reveal it where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern.

6. Procedure

- 6.1 If you wish to raise concerns which might fall into the above categories you should make your disclosure in writing to the Director of People who will appoint an investigating officer. The Director of People will consider your written disclosure, take appropriate advice, and decide if the matter is a whistleblowing matter. You will be informed by the Director of People if your concerns will be investigated under this policy. In the absence of the –Director of People you should approach a member of the Executive Team.
- 6.2 It is not necessary that you prove the malpractice or misconduct that you are alleging, this will be for the investigation to ascertain, you are simply raising a reasonable suspicion which shall be investigated fairly.
- 6.3 Once you have raised a concern a meeting will take place with you in order to gather all the information needed to understand the situation. You may be accompanied by a fellow worker at this meeting. Following the meeting, an investigation will be carried out. You will be informed of the outcome of the investigation by the person conducting the investigation.
- 6.4 The person conducting the investigation will take any necessary action, including, if appropriate reporting the matter to the Board of Governors, the police, any appropriate governmental department or regulatory body. If disciplinary action is required, the matter will be discussed with the Director of People and disciplinary proceedings will commence in line with the School's disciplinary procedure.

7. Protection and Support for Whistle-blowers

- 7.1 You should be aware that protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act will apply where a disclosure is made in good faith and without any personal gain, and where you reasonably believe the disclosure (and any allegation/s contained within) are substantially true.
- 7.2 This policy has been produced in accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which protects workers making disclosures about malpractice within the organisation (where those disclosures are made in accordance with the provisions of the Act) from dismissal or detriment short of dismissal.

8. Abuse

- 8.1 The School will not tolerate malicious allegations being raised under this policy. Where the School believes that a worker has made a false allegation or acted maliciously, the individual will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include dismissal for gross misconduct.
- 8.2 Victimisation of a worker by any other worker for raising a concern under this policy will in itself constitute a disciplinary offence.

8.3 This policy cannot be used to re-examine issues that have already been addressed through the grievance or disciplinary procedures.

9. Additional Information

9.1 If you have any queries about this procedure you should contact the Director of People.

9.2 If you do not reasonably believe that appropriate action has been taken in relation to your concern, then you may raise it externally to the prescribed regulator. The charity, Protect, can provide advice about raising the concern externally. This will include advising who the appropriate prescribed regulator is. The website for Protect is: <https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

This policy and procedure is non-contractual and will be reviewed annually.