



Merchant Taylors' Schools, Crosby

Whistle Blowing Policy

Policy Owner	Headteacher
Policy Author	Director of Finance and HR
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Circulation:	All Staff & Governors Inspection Portal School Website Parent Portal Senior & Sixth Form Pupils
Related Policies:	Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy (with reference to KCSIE 2025) Staff Code of Conduct Complaints Policy Grievance Procedure
Regulatory Body (if applicable)	Department for Education / Independent Schools Inspectorate
Relevant legislation/guidelines	Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended); Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

Contents

Aims 3

Scope 3

Principles..... 3

Confidentiality..... 4

Procedure..... 4

Abuse 4

Additional Information..... 5

1. Aims

1.1 Merchant Taylors' Schools encourage a free and open culture in which employees, volunteers, governors, pupils, and visitors feel confident in raising concerns. Effective, honest communication is essential if wrongdoing, safeguarding failures or breaches of standards are to be addressed.

1.2 The aim of this policy is to encourage workers to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Concerns raised under this policy will be treated seriously and, as far as possible, confidentially. Anyone raising a genuine concern will not be treated unfavourably for doing so, even if the concern is later found to be mistaken.

1.3 This policy is produced in accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which protects workers who disclose concerns about malpractice in good faith and in the public interest.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all those working in or with the School, including employees, agency staff, casual workers, PGCE trainees, volunteers, and governors.

3. Principles

3.1 Whistleblowing occurs when information is disclosed that is in the public interest and indicates that wrongdoing is being, has been, or is likely to be committed. This may include:

- 3.1.1 Committing a criminal offence (e.g., theft, fraud)
- 3.1.2 Failing to comply with a legal obligation
- 3.1.3 A miscarriage of justice
- 3.1.4 Endangering the health and safety of an individual
- 3.1.5 Environmental damage
- 3.1.6 Breach of safeguarding responsibilities or failure to follow statutory guidance
- 3.1.7 Deliberate concealment of any of the above

3.2 This procedure should not be used to raise issues relating to personal employment circumstances. These should be raised through the Grievance Procedure.

3.3 Protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act applies where the disclosure is made in good faith, without personal gain, and where the worker reasonably believes the information is true.

3.4 Provided this procedure is used correctly and you believe the truth of the facts you are reporting, you will not suffer any detriment. If you believe you have suffered a detriment, you should inform a member of the Executive Team; if unresolved, you should raise it formally under the Grievance Procedure.

4. Confidentiality

4.1 Concerns may be raised confidentially. Where confidentiality is requested, the School will make every effort to protect your identity and only disclose it where necessary (e.g., for safeguarding, police investigation, or legal compliance).

4.2 Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if the matter becomes a statutory, safeguarding or criminal investigation.

5. Procedure

5.1 Raising a Concern

If you wish to raise a concern, you should make your disclosure in writing to the: **Director of Finance & HR**, who will appoint an Investigating Officer.

If the concern relates to the Director of Finance & HR you should contact: **The Headmaster**.

If the concern relates to the Headmaster, you should contact: **The Chair of Governors**

This ensures an alternative route as required by statutory guidance.

5.2 Investigation Process

5.2 You are not required to prove the wrongdoing; you simply need to have a reasonable suspicion. It is the investigation that will establish the facts.

5.3 After raising a concern, a meeting will be arranged with you to gather information. You may be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative.

5.4 The Investigating Officer will determine appropriate action, including (if necessary) reporting to the Board of Governors, LADO, police, ISI, DfE, or other regulatory bodies. If disciplinary action is required, the matter will proceed under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.

5.5 You may not be informed of certain outcomes if they relate to confidential personnel matters.

6. Abuse

6.1 The School will not tolerate malicious or knowingly false allegations. Where such behaviour is identified, disciplinary action may follow, up to and including dismissal for gross misconduct.

6.2 Victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern will also constitute a disciplinary offence.

7. Additional Information

7.1 If you require advice about using this policy, please contact the Director of Finance & HR.

7.2 If you believe appropriate action has not been taken, you may raise your concern externally with a "prescribed regulator". These include:

- The Department for Education
- The Independent Schools Inspectorate
- Ofsted (for EYFS matters)
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (safeguarding concerns)
- The Police

You may also seek independent advice from the charity **Protect**, who provide confidential whistleblowing guidance:

<https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

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