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Whistleblowing Policy & Procedure

Last reviewed on:	August 2026 – Effective from 1 September 2026
Next review due by:	August 2027
Approved by MIET Board of Trustees:	

1. Introduction

MMPS is committed to conducting its business with honesty and integrity, and expects all staff to maintain high standards in line with contractual obligations and school policies.

All organisations face the risk of things going wrong or unknowingly harbouring illegal or unethical conduct. A culture of openness and accountability is essential to prevent such situations and to address them when they arise.

This procedure provides a route for raising concerns about wrongdoing or unsafe practice. Staff are encouraged to raise concerns internally where appropriate but are not required to raise them through their normal line-management route first, particularly where the line manager may be involved or the member of staff does not feel able to do so.

Concerns relating solely to an individual's personal employment circumstances will normally be dealt with under the Grievance Procedure in the Staff Handbook

Where a concern also raises wider wrongdoing or a matter in the public interest, it may fall within this policy and both procedures may be used where appropriate.

2. Aims of the Policy

- To encourage staff to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible.
- To reassure individuals that concerns raised with a reasonable belief that wrongdoing has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur will be taken seriously and handled appropriately.
- To provide clear guidance on how to raise concerns.
- To protect individuals from victimisation or other detrimental treatment because they have raised a concern, including where a concern is not ultimately substantiated.

This policy has regard to Part IVA of the Employment Rights Act 1996, as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and subsequent legislation, current government guidance on whistleblowing, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the statutory EYFS framework. It does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.

3. Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to all individuals working for or on behalf of MMPS, including employees, fixed-term and temporary staff, supply and agency staff, contractors, consultants, trainee teachers, students on placement and volunteers. The school will also consider concerns raised by former workers where relevant. Statutory whistleblowing protection depends on an individual's legal status as a 'worker', but MMPS will apply the principles of confidentiality, fair treatment and protection from retaliation to everyone using this procedure.

4. Scope of Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which the individual reasonably believes is in the public interest and tends to show that wrongdoing has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.

This may include:

- a criminal offence;
- a failure to comply with a legal obligation;
- a miscarriage of justice;
- danger to the health or safety of any individual;
- damage to the environment;
- sexual harassment; or
- deliberate concealment of information relating to any of the above.

School-related examples may include financial fraud or serious financial mismanagement, serious safeguarding failures, unsafe working practices, serious breaches of data protection or confidentiality obligations or serious breaches of other legal or regulatory requirements.

A concern about the welfare or safety of an individual child must be acted upon immediately under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and reported to the DSL or DDSL.

This Whistleblowing Policy is particularly relevant where an individual is concerned about poor or unsafe safeguarding practice, a failure in the school's safeguarding provision or the way in which a safeguarding concern has been handled.

This policy does not cover complaints about personal employment circumstances. In such cases, the Grievance Procedure in the Staff Handbook applies.

5. Raising a Concern

A concern may be raised verbally or in writing with the individual's Line Manager, the Headteacher, the CEO or the Chair of Trustees. The individual does not need to raise the matter with their Line Manager first where they do not feel able to do so or where that person may be involved. Safeguarding-practice concerns may also be raised with the DSL/DDSL. The person receiving the disclosure will arrange for it to be handled by an appropriate person who is not implicated in the concern.

The whistleblower is not required to prove the allegation or provide conclusive evidence before the school will consider it.

The person appointed to handle the concern will normally meet the whistleblower promptly, record details of the concern, and explain how confidentiality will be protected and any circumstances in which information may need to be shared.

Staff may be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative.

A written summary of the concern will be provided within five working days. The school will also outline how the matter will be handled.

6. Staff Awareness and Training

The school will ensure that this policy and the routes for raising concerns are explained to staff as part of induction and reinforced through safeguarding training and updates.

EYFS staff, students and volunteers will be made aware of the setting's whistleblowing procedures, including when and how concerns should be reported, what will happen after a concern is raised and the expectation that concerns about poor or unsafe practice will be taken seriously.

7. Safeguards Against Victimisation

A worker who makes a protected disclosure meeting the statutory requirements is protected under Part IVA of the Employment Rights Act 1996 from dismissal or detrimental treatment because they have made the disclosure.

MMPS will not tolerate victimisation, harassment, bullying or any other retaliation against anyone who raises a concern under this policy. Any such conduct may be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

Nothing in an employment contract, confidentiality agreement or other non-disclosure provision prevents a worker from making a protected whistleblowing disclosure

8. Anonymous Allegations

Individuals are encouraged to identify themselves where they feel able to do so, as this may make investigation and feedback easier. However, anonymous concerns will still be taken seriously and considered on the information available. Anonymous reporting may make it more difficult to investigate the concern fully or provide feedback to the person raising it.

When considering an anonymous concern, the person appointed to handle the matter will take account of:

- The seriousness of the issue
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of corroborating evidence

9. Confidentiality

Concerns will be treated in confidence where possible. Where disclosure of identity is necessary, the school will discuss this with the whistleblower.

No action will be taken against an individual simply because a concern is not substantiated. Deliberately making an allegation which the individual knows to be false may, following appropriate investigation, be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

10. Concerns Involving Trustees

A concern about a Trustee should be raised with the Chair of Trustees. Where the Chair is implicated, the concern should be raised with another Trustee who is not involved, the CEO or an independent person appointed by the Trust. Where there is no appropriate internal route, or the whistleblower does not feel able to use it, the concern may be raised with an appropriate prescribed person or regulator, including the Secretary of State for Education/DfE where the matter relates to the independent school

11. External Disclosures

Workers may make a disclosure to an appropriate prescribed person or regulator where the statutory requirements are met. The appropriate body will depend on the subject matter of the concern. For matters relating to an independent school, the Secretary of State for Education/DfE is a prescribed person. For child welfare and protection matters, the NSPCC is a prescribed person and operates the Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285 and help@nspcc.org.uk

Other prescribed regulators may include the Health and Safety Executive or Information Commissioner where the concern falls within their remit. The Police should be contacted where criminal conduct or immediate danger requires police involvement.

Independent advice may be sought from Protect, Acas, a trade union or professional association or a legal adviser.

For concerns about compliance with EYFS regulatory requirements, staff may also use Ofsted's current complaints procedure. Staff should refer to GOV.UK for the current contact route.

12. Investigation and Outcome

An initial assessment will determine the appropriate method and scope of investigation. The school or Trust will appoint an appropriately skilled and impartial person who is not implicated in the matter. Depending on the nature of the concern, this may be a senior leader, Trustee, HR adviser or independent external investigator.

Where the disclosure involves a safeguarding allegation or concern about an adult working with children, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and KCSIE Part Four procedures will take precedence, including consultation with the LADO where required. The school will not undertake an internal investigation which could prejudice a statutory or external-agency process.

Timescales:

Written acknowledgement will normally be provided within five working days. The school will aim to conclude investigations within 15 working days where reasonably practicable.

Where this is not possible because of complexity or involvement of an external agency, the whistleblower will be informed of the likely timescale and kept appropriately updated

13. Appeals and Reviews

There is no formal appeal against the substantive outcome of a whistleblowing investigation. However, where the whistleblower believes that the concern has not been properly considered or the procedure has not been followed, they may request a review by the CEO, Chair of Trustees or another suitably independent person who has not previously been involved. This does not affect the individual's right to seek independent advice or make an appropriate external disclosure

14. Record Keeping

A secure record will be kept of whistleblowing concerns, the decisions made, actions taken and outcome. Information will be shared only with those who need it for the proper handling of the concern. Records relating to safeguarding matters will also be maintained in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and applicable record-retention requirements.

15. Safeguarding Link

Safeguarding concerns must always be acted upon without delay. A concern about the welfare of a child must be reported immediately in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to the DSL or DDSL. A safeguarding concern or allegation about a member of staff, supply staff member, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor must be reported in accordance with the school's allegations/low-level concerns procedures. A concern or allegation about the Headteacher must be referred to the Chair of Trustees/proprietor and, where there is a conflict of interest in reporting to the Headteacher, the matter may need to be reported directly to the LADO.

Where the concern relates to poor or unsafe safeguarding practice, a potential failure in the school's safeguarding provision or concern about how a safeguarding matter is being handled, this Whistleblowing Policy should be used. Where a member of staff feels unable to raise such a concern internally or believes it is not being addressed, the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line is available on 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk

16. Links with Other Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Low-Level Concern Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- EYFS Policy
- Staff Handbook - Grievance Procedure

Appendix 1 – Quick Reference Guide

Reasons for Whistleblowing

- To prevent harm, malpractice or risk to others
- To avoid being implicated in wrongdoing

Barriers to Whistleblowing

- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Concern about being wrong
- Worry about not being believed

How to Raise a Concern

Raise the concern with your Line Manager, Headteacher or another appropriate senior leader. You may bypass your Line Manager where necessary.

Safeguarding-practice concerns may also be raised with the DSL/DDSL. If the concern involves the Headteacher, raise it with the Chair of Trustees. If an appropriate internal route cannot be used, seek advice and/or use an appropriate external route such as DfE, the NSPCC or another prescribed person/regulator relevant to the concern.

You may raise a concern verbally or in writing and you do not need to prove the wrongdoing before reporting it.

Response Timescales

- Acknowledgement within five working days.
- Investigation concluded within 15 working days where possible.

Support Available

Independent advice may be obtained from Protect, Acas, a trade union or professional association or a legal adviser. For concerns about child welfare or child-protection failures, staff may contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.