



**ETON DORNEY**  
INDEPENDENT THERAPEUTIC SCHOOL  
**NURTURING KINDNESS, COMPASSION & SELF BELIEF**

<b>School:</b>	<b>Eton Dorney</b>		
<b>Policy:</b>	<b>Complaints Policy</b>		
<p>This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.</p> <p>This policy will be read, understood and signed by all staff yearly and where changes have been made in line with government and DofE guidelines and changes.</p>			
<b>Date of last review:</b>	July 2020	<b>Review period:</b>	Annual
<b>Date of next review:</b>	July 2021	<b>Owner:</b>	Eton Dorney School
<b>Type of policy:</b>	Statutory	<b>LGB/Board approval</b>	Board approves; GB signs off
<b>Version:</b>	V 2.0	Relationship to other policies	© 2020 Eton Dorney School

**Rationale**

EDITS hold the interests of each Young Person in the highest regard and is rightly proud of the quality of its pastoral care. However, there may be times when a Young Person may feel the need to complain about something that is causing him/her concern, such as alleged unfair treatment by another Young Person or member of staff.

We encourage everyone who has a concern or complaint to come forward and express them so that EDITS is able to put it right, resolve situations and improve processes.

Matters concerning Young Persons can be brought to the attention of EDITS by parents, but each Young Person is encouraged to raise any issues that concern them themselves, rather than ask their parents to take these up with EDITS. This empowers them to take responsibility for their own actions, develops their independence and is in keeping with the ethos of EDITS, which promotes mutual respect and trust between staff and Young Persons.

**Stage 1: Informal Resolution**

However, if parents have cause to complain they should try to clarify and resolve the problem by contacting the appropriate subject teacher or form tutor in the first instance by means of a phone call or meeting. If a complaint is lodged by a parent against a member of staff, that member of staff will normally be informed of the nature and source of the complaint. The Head may ask the member of staff to deal with it him/herself with support, do it themselves or ask a Governor to do so. An initial response will be given within 5 working days. A written record of concerns and complaints will be made.

## Stage 2: Formal Resolution

In the event of a more serious concern, or if a complaint has not been resolved informally, the matter should be raised in writing with the Head of Centre. Letters will be acknowledged, and the matter investigated within two weeks of receipt of the complaint. Following which the decision will be communicated in writing to parents with reasons given.

## Stage 3: Panel Hearing

If EDITS is deemed by a parent not to have resolved a matter satisfactorily, or if the complaint is about a decision or an action taken by the Head, then the parent may complain in writing to the Board of Governors. The Chair of Governors will initially investigate the complaint and then corresponded with the family.

If the complaint has not be resolved then it will be referred to a complaints panel, convened within three weeks of receipt of the request to further pursue complaint and consisting of three individuals all of whom are not directly involved in the matter and at least one of whom is not involved in the management and running of EDITS which the parents may attend accompanied by one other person. The complainant will receive at least three days' notice of the meeting date. The outcome of that review will be final and will be communicated in writing, electronic or otherwise, to the complainant and, where relevant, to the person complained about within one week of the hearing.

Written records will be kept of all complaints, electronic or otherwise, and their outcomes, whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, when a complaint is submitted in writing or whether they proceed to a panel hearing.

All correspondence, statements, and records of complaints, electronic or otherwise, will be kept confidential but will be available to Ofsted when they inspect to the Registration Authority on request.

## Whistle Blowing

### Rationale

EDITS is committed to achieving the highest possible standards of service and ethics in public life and in all its activities. Employees are encouraged to bring to their managers' attention any misconduct, suspected misconduct, malpractice or illegal acts or omissions by governors, employees, or by members of the public in relation to the services they receive from EDITS.

### Summary

This whistleblowing policy has been developed so that employees will know how to raise concerns in the right way at an early stage, and managers understand their responsibilities in relation to allegations of misconduct and impropriety. For the avoidance of doubt, reference to employees includes all staff employed by EDITS and services which are maintained by the charity.

Employees who make a disclosure reasonably believing that:

- a) a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed,
- b) a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which they are subject, (including Safeguarding)
- c) a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur,
- d) the health or safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered,
- e) the environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged, or
- f) information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding paragraphs has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed are protected by law (under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998) from any victimisation for having raised these issues.

Employees of the company partners and contractors are also encouraged to use these procedures to bring any misconduct, or suspected misconduct, malpractice or illegal acts or omissions by governors, Council employees, or by partners'/contractors'

employees in relation to the provision of services on behalf of the charity, to the attention of appropriate school managers. School partners and contractors will be required to bring this procedure to the attention of their employees.

### Standard

This policy should be used when employees have concerns that the interests of others or EDITS (and therefore its Young Persons) are at risk e.g.

- Criminal activities and any activities, suspected or ongoing, which may break the law (including fraud, any form of child abuse, or the abuse of other vulnerable clients)
- Disregard for legislation, safeguarding, policies and procedures
- The mistreatment of a Young Person which may endanger the health and safety or safeguarding of that Young Person.
- This list is not exhaustive

Employees raising issues, and managers investigating them, will suffer no detriment as a result, provided they act in good faith i.e. they genuinely believe that there is, or may be, substance in their allegations. EDITS will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation of a whistleblower (including informal pressures), and will treat this as a serious disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under its disciplinary procedures. An employee whose concerns are raised under this procedure but referred for investigation under another procedure will receive the same protection from victimisation under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

- An employee can raise concerns orally or, preferably, in writing.
- Any concerns raised by an employee will be dealt with promptly.
- The concerns will be considered as thoroughly as possible by the most relevant person, whether this be an internal manager or some appropriate external official or organisation delegated by the charity.
- Employees have the right to seek assistance and advice from trade union representatives or school colleagues; and to be accompanied by a trade union representative or school colleague at all meetings held under this procedure.
- EDITS will not tolerate complaints which are deliberately made without substance, or are frivolous or malicious. Such cases will be dealt with very seriously and formal disciplinary action may be considered under EDITS's disciplinary procedures.

This policy does not restrict employees' rights to raise their concerns outside EDITS (e.g. the Audit Commission, the Environment Agency, the Health and Safety Executive or the police), but is intended to facilitate speedy internal investigation and resolve employees' concerns, so that they do not feel the need to refer to external agencies.

### Managers' Responsibilities

Managers must:

- Deal promptly and fairly with any concerns raised under this policy in accordance with the procedure set out in Appendix 1;
- Make sure that the employee's concerns are appropriate for consideration under this policy as against another procedure (e.g. grievance or disciplinary procedures). If the concerns are not appropriate to this policy, refer them to the correct procedure.
- Immediately refer matters concerning fraud and/or corrupt acts to the Chair of Governors.
- Support and facilitate the employee in pursuing whistleblowing concerns.
- Maintain confidentiality throughout any proceedings.

- As far as possible, withhold the identity of the employee who has raised the concerns, if the employee has so requested. (Managers may be obliged in some circumstances to reveal the name of the employee who raised concerns, in which event the situation should be discussed with the employee before proceeding.);
- Keep the employee apprised of progress in investigating and resolving their concerns.
- Advise the employee that they have the right to bring a trade union representative or a colleague to any meetings under this policy;
- Implement any actions/recommendations arising from the investigation into the employee's concerns;
- Not allow the employee to suffer any detriment as a result of raising their concerns (to do so would be unlawful under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998); and
- Investigate anonymous complaints as far as practicable.
- Contact LADO where safeguarding concerns are flagged

### Employee's Responsibilities

Employees must

- Raise concerns (orally or in writing) in confidence with their managers (or their manager's manager if it is inappropriate to raise the concerns with their immediate line-manager) at the earliest possible moment. In exceptional circumstances, employees may raise concerns with the Chair of Governors.
- Never carry out their own investigation.
- Assist with any investigation into their concerns, including attendance at meetings, replying to requests for information, and providing signed statements as appropriate.
- Immediately pass any evidence to the investigating manager/ official.
- Follow the stages of the procedure in sequence.
- Always act honestly and in good faith when raising and pursuing concerns through this policy; and
- Inform the investigating manager/official if they have a personal interest in the matters under investigation.

Employees are encouraged to raise "whistleblowing" concerns in the first instance via this policy rather than going straight to external agencies. Reporting concerns to e.g. the press may seriously undermine any investigation into the issues of concern. Advice can be obtained from a trade union representative or "Public Concern at Work" (phone: 020 7404 6609; web: [www.pcaw.co.uk/](http://www.pcaw.co.uk/)), an independent charity which gives advice on how to raise concerns about serious malpractice at work.

## APPENDIX 1: Whistleblowing at Work Procedure

### Raising concerns internally

#### Step 1 Raising concerns

1. The employee may raise their complaints orally or, preferably, in writing to their manager: Head Teacher and detail the issues about which they are concerned.  
Melissa Farnham
  
2. If it is not appropriate to raise these concerns with the Head Teacher (e.g. because they are about that manager's conduct), the employee may refer matters to the Chair of Governors. In exceptional circumstances, employees may raise concerns with a manager who is outside their service.  
Robin Ward  
Chair of Governors  
Alternatively, employees can use the Fraud and Whistleblowing Hotline (0800 028 9888; [on-line](#)) to report concerns
  
3. The manager will confirm that the employee's concerns are appropriate to this procedure; if not, the employee should be referred to the appropriate procedure. Matters concerning "fraudulent or corrupt acts" should be referred to the Fraud Team.
  
4. The manager will meet the employee as a priority and gather as much information as possible.
  
5. The manager will assess what action is necessary to investigate and respond to the employee's concerns. They will write to the employee within five days of the meeting summarising the employee's concerns and informing them as to how these will be investigated. The manager will also inform the employee of the timescales within which the investigation will be completed.  
When considering the action needed to investigate and address the employee's concerns, the manager may seek advice and direction from external officials.  
LADO (Safeguarding)  
Barry Armstrong 01269382070
  
6. The employee will be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation. The employee will receive as much feedback as possible, subject to the duty of confidence to other parties who may be involved.

#### Step 2

1. The employee may proceed to step 2 and refer their concerns to the Chair of Governors if they:
  - remain dissatisfied with the response in step 1; or
  - have not received a response to their concerns within the timescales set out by the manager at step 1.
  
2. The Chair of Governors will take appropriate action such as:
  - Reviewing the investigation to date and giving instructions on its further conduct;
  - Assuming responsibility for an investigation in progress;
  - Initiating an investigation;
  - Delegating an investigation appropriately or to an appropriate external official.

3. The Chair of Governors will inform the employee in writing about action to progress the investigation with timescales and/or their decision in relation to the employee's further representations. The employee will receive as much feedback as possible, subject to the duty of confidence to other parties who may be involved.