



**ETON DORNEY**  
INDEPENDENT THERAPEUTIC SCHOOL

**NURTURING KINDNESS, COMPASSION, TOLERANCE & SELF BELIEF**

<b>School:</b>	<b>Eton Dorney</b>		
<b>Policy:</b>	<b>WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY (RAISING CONCERNS AT WORK)</b>		
<p>This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis but will be reviewed termly by the Headteacher.</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>	October 2019	<b>Review period:</b>	Annual
<b>Date of next review:</b>	September 2020	<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>	V0.1	© 2018 Eton Dorney School	

**Rationale**

The Headteacher and staff seek to run all aspects of school business and activity with full regard for high standards of conduct and integrity. If members of staff, parents, governors or the school's community at large become aware of activities which give cause for concern, the School has this Whistleblowing Policy which acts as a framework to allow concerns to be raised confidentially and provides for a thorough and appropriate investigation of the matter to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion, if necessary under the Schools disciplinary procedure.

**Aims**

The aims of this whistleblowing policy are to:

- enable employees of Eton Dorney School or other stakeholders to raise any perceived matters of impropriety in a confidential manner;
- highlight the Schools commitment to ensuring that integrity is maintained within all its, and its member schools, processes;
- resolve any perceived matters of impropriety as near as possible to their point of origin;
- operate in a way which will not result in the victimisation of an individual who brings about a complaint under the whistleblowing policy.

**Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure**

The Headteacher has the responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;

**This Procedure should be made available to all Eton Dorney School employees.**

## Introduction

1. The Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life: Local Public Spending Bodies published by The Nolan Committee used the term "whistleblowing" to mean the confidential raising of problems or concerns within an organisation by a member of staff. This is not "leaking" information but refers to matters of impropriety e.g. a breach of law, school procedures or ethics. Nor is whistleblowing the raising of a grievance within the school (which would be dealt with under the staff grievance procedures).
2. The staff of Eton Dorney School seek to run all aspects of school business and activity with full regard for high standards of conduct and integrity. If members of staff, parents, governors or the school's community at large become aware of activities which give cause for concern, the school has this Whistleblowing Policy which acts as a framework to allow concerns to be raised confidentially and provides for a thorough and appropriate investigation of the matter to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion, if necessary, under the school's disciplinary procedure.
3. The school is committed to tackling fraud and other forms of malpractice and treats these issues seriously. Eton Dorney School recognises that some concerns may be extremely sensitive and has therefore developed a system which allows for the confidential raising of concerns.

## When might the whistleblowing policy apply?

4. Individuals are encouraged to come forward in good faith with genuine concerns knowing they will be taken seriously. A whistleblower should ask a few questions before taking action:
  - is it, or do you believe, the action to be illegal?
  - is it, or do you believe it to be, against codes of practice issued by the school.
  - does it contradict what the employee has been taught, or should have been taught?
  - is it about an individual's behaviour or is it about general working practices?
  - has the whistleblower witnessed the incident?
5. If any individual raises malicious unfounded concerns or attempts to make mischief, this will also be taken seriously and may constitute a disciplinary offence or require some other form of penalty appropriate to the circumstances. All allegations should be capable of being dealt with through the disciplinary procedure and will be considered appropriately.
6. Where the alleged activity or behaviour cannot be dealt with under the scope of other procedures then consideration should be given to using this Whistleblowing Policy e.g.
  - manipulation of accounting records and finances;
  - inappropriate use of school assets or funds;
  - decision making for personal gain;
  - any criminal activity;
  - damage to the environment of the school;
  - dangerous practices;
  - abuse of position;
  - fraud and deceit or corrupt practices;

- serious breaches of school procedures which may advantage a particular party (for example tampering with tender documentation, failure to register a personal interest);
- sexual or physical abuse of pupils or others;
- other unethical conduct.

Anonymous allegations will only be considered if the issues raised are:

- very serious;
- the credibility of the allegation is considered to be high;
- the likelihood of confirming the allegation is high.

## Procedure

- 9.** Eton Dorney School encourages the whistleblower to raise the matter internally in the first instance with their line manager (or the Headteacher, if the line manager is the one under suspicion). In the instance where the Headteacher is under suspicion or investigation matters would need to be raised to the Managing Director, Rachel Redgwell. This will allow them to right the wrong and give an explanation for the behaviour or activity. Alternatively, the whistleblower may request a private and confidential meeting in the first instance with the person who is causing concern.
- 10.** All matters will be treated in strict confidence and anonymity will be respected wherever possible. Written, dated and signed supporting evidence and statements should always be taken to any meetings if possible.

## How will the matter be progressed?

- 11.** The individual(s) in receipt of the information or allegation (the investigating officer(s)) will carry out a preliminary investigation. This will seek to establish the facts of the matter and assess whether the concern has foundation and can or should be resolved internally. The initial assessment may identify the need to involve third parties to provide further information, advice or assistance, for example involvement of other members of school staff, legal or personnel advisors and the Police.
- 12.** Records will be kept of work undertaken and actions taken throughout the investigation. The investigating officer(s) will consider how best to report the findings and what corrective action needs to be considered. This may include some form of disciplinary action and/or third party referral such as the Police.
- 13.** Depending on the nature of the concern or allegation and whether or not the investigating officer considers there to be a case to answer, the disciplinary procedure may be applied. In such cases any disciplinary action will be considered in line with the school disciplinary procedures.

## Respecting confidentiality

- 15.** Wherever possible Eton Dorney School seeks to respect the confidentiality and anonymity of the whistleblower and will as far as possible protect him/her from reprisals. The school will not tolerate any attempt to harass or victimise the whistleblower, or attempts to prevent concerns being raised, and will consider any necessary disciplinary or corrective action appropriate to the circumstances.

## Conclusion

Good practice will be established within Eton Dorney School in terms of the systems of internal control, both financial and non-financial to ensure that cases of suspected fraud or impropriety will rarely occur and are swiftly identified. This Whistleblowing Policy is provided as a reference document to establish a framework within which issues can be raised confidentially. This document is a public commitment that concerns are taken seriously and will be actioned.