

# Rhodes Avenue Primary School

Whistleblowing Policy  
Spring 2016



RHODES AVENUE  
PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Whistleblowing Policy Spring 2016

### **Introduction**

This School expects the highest standards of conduct from all its employees and contractors, and will treat seriously any concern that an employee may have about illegal or improper conduct. This policy is intended to encourage and enable staff to raise any such concerns within the School, without fear of reprisals.

'Whistleblowing' is the informal term for what the law describes as 'making a protected disclosure in the public interest'. Where such a disclosure is made, the employee who makes it is legally protected from any negative treatment, by the School or by individuals working in it, on the basis that the disclosure has been made.

### **Aims and Scope of this policy**

This policy is designed to enable employees and contractors to notify an appropriate individual within the school (see further below) of any reasonable suspicion of illegal or improper conduct.

This policy is not designed to replace or be used as an alternative to the grievance procedure, which should be used where an employee is aggrieved about his/her own situation alone.

### **What conduct is covered?**

Employees and contractors are encouraged to report to the appropriate individual (see further below) any serious concerns about any aspects of the School's work which are not purely personal to them.

These may be, for example, concerns about:

- A criminal offence
- The breach of a legal obligation (including, for example, financial irregularity or discrimination)
- A miscarriage of justice
- A danger to the health and safety of any individual (and see specific section below concerning Safeguarding)
- Damage to the environment
- A deliberate attempt to conceal any of the above.

To be protected under the law, the member of staff must also believe, reasonably, that the disclosure which he or she is making is accurate and is in the public interest.

### **Consequences of making a report**

No employee who complies with these requirements will be penalised for doing so. The school will not tolerate harassment and/or victimisation of any staff member raising concerns. Any employee who victimises, harasses, or otherwise treats differently an employee who has raised such a concern will be dealt with in accordance with the following School policies:

- Staff discipline, conduct and grievance
- Allegations of abuse against staff

Where an employee makes an allegation which he or she does not reasonably believe to be accurate or in the public interest, however, or where he or she does so maliciously or vexatiously, disciplinary action may be taken against him or her.

### **How should concerns be raised?**

All concerns should normally be raised with the Head teacher. The Head teacher will act swiftly and constructively in the investigation of any concerns in accordance with this policy, the School's disciplinary procedure and any other relevant policies.

Where the issue concerns the Head teacher or, having made the report, the employee or contractor believes that the Head teacher has failed to take sufficient and/or appropriate action, the employee or contractor should report the concern to the Chair of Governors.

Where an employee has followed this procedure, but remains dissatisfied with the action taken, or where, for any reason, he or she feels unable to do so, he or she may contact their trade union or Haringey Council directly (*The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning*). The Government also maintains and publishes a list of "prescribed persons" and bodies to whom disclosures may properly be made.

### **The process**

The earlier and more open the expression of concern the easier it will be to take appropriate action.

Depending on the nature of the concern the complainant may be asked to justify and support it, normally in writing. It may, therefore, be helpful to note down any facts and dates as they happen.

The complainant may be accompanied to any meeting by a recognised trade union representative or work colleague who is not involved in the issue to which the concern relates.

Where anonymity is requested efforts will be made to meet the request where appropriate, although proper investigation of the concern may make this impossible. Much will depend on the circumstances of the individual complaint.

Each case will be investigated thoroughly with the aim of taking action, where appropriate, as quickly as possible. The complainant will be informed of the outcome of the complaint.

### **Safeguarding Children and Young People**

All employees have a duty to report concerns about the safety and welfare of pupils.

Such concerns should be reported not only to the Head teacher but also to the School's

Designated Senior Person for Child Protection (Ms Emel Ali). Please refer to the *Safeguarding Policy* or the Safeguarding notice board in the staff room.

### **Equalities**

Rhodes Avenue will ensure that it complies with its duties under the *Equality Act 2010* and have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the abovementioned Act.

### **Complaints**

Any complaints about the application or operation of this Policy will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Complaint's Policy which can be downloaded from the school's website or hard copies can be collected from the school office.

### **Procedures for policy monitoring/review and dissemination**

All members of staff and governors will receive a copy of this policy. Copies are available to parents on request. This Policy has been approved by the Governing Body and the School Leadership Team and it will be reviewed in line with the school's *Policy Schedule*.

### **Persons responsible:**

Headteacher  
Deputy Head teacher  
School Business Manager  
The Governing Body