

## Whistleblowing and Poor Practice Policy

This policy is a whole school policy including EYFS

### Introduction

#### **Wrongdoing at work:**

This procedure is designed to deal with disclosure of information by an employee which relates to some danger, bribery, corruption, fraud or other unlawful or unethical conduct in the workplace. Employment legislation governs the making of disclosures concerning workplace activities and is intended to protect employees who blow the whistle on bad practice from being subjected to any detriment or from being unfairly dismissed as a result. This procedure is available to all employees who discover something they feel they should pass on in the interests of the public and/or school. All types of wrongdoing are included whether they are acts committed by fellow employees, faults in School procedures or oversights which should be rectified. The procedure should be used even in the event that the act or omission causing you concern has finished or has not yet started.

**Grievances:** This procedure should not however be used where you have a complaint relating to your personal circumstances in the workplace. The Grievance Procedure contained in the Staff Handbook should be used in such cases.

**Detriment:** Provided that this procedure is used appropriately and correctly, you will not suffer any detriment as a result of reporting the wrongdoing. A failure to follow this procedure may however make the disclosure unreasonable and the protection given to you by this procedure may be lost. Please also see the Low Level Concerns Policy.

**Keeping Children Safe in Education:** For the avoidance of doubt nothing within this policy is intended to prevent staff from complying with their statutory obligations in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (Sept 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021) and Working together to Safeguard Children (July 2015 and 2018). The member of staff is advised to follow the school's Safeguarding Policy, alongside this guidance. Importantly if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care straightaway.

#### **Stage one**

**Procedure:** You should disclose the suspected wrongdoing to the Proprietor or the Headteacher. If the concern is about an action by the Headteacher or Proprietor, the complaint should be put in writing to the nominated person, James Shone (non-stipend School Chaplain), in an envelope, marked private and confidential to the school. The school will forward this to James Shone at the earliest opportunity, unless it is a Safeguarding concern in which case please follow the procedures clearly detailed in the Safeguarding Policy.

**Response:** You can expect a response detailing to whom the disclosure has been notified or any action taken within seven days of the Headteacher or School Chaplain becoming aware of the disclosure.

## **Stage two**

**Procedure** If no such response is forthcoming within seven days you should once more inform the Headteacher or School Chaplain of the disclosure.

## **Stage three**

**Outside body:** If you do not receive a response within the next seven school days you shall be entitled to notify a relevant and appropriate body outside the school which may include:

- the Local Authority Designated Officer
- Children's Social Care
- the Health and Safety Executive
- the Environment Agency
- the Information Commissioner
- the Department for Education
- the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform
- the Police
- the Charity Commission
- the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)
- the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)

**Bypassing the procedure:** In extreme circumstances you will have the right to raise your concern directly with a relevant and appropriate outside body without first having followed the stages above. This may however cause damage to the School and its reputation as well as constitute a breach of your own duty of confidentiality towards the School and this action should only be taken in extreme circumstances and after careful thought.

**Extreme circumstances:** The School will consider extreme circumstances exist where you have a reasonable belief that: the School will subject you to detriment if you inform the Headteacher in accordance with Stage One above or if you inform the Headteacher in accordance with Stage Two; a cover-up is being mounted by the School; or a disclosure made previously to the Headteacher in accordance with the stages above has not prompted a satisfactory response.

**The media:** Even where extreme circumstances are thought to exist, you should under no circumstances approach a commercial body or the media with details of the

# Springmead School

Date: 17/08/2022  
Review period: 1 year

suspected wrongdoing. If you approach any such body and / or where your concern is disclosed for personal gain, the School may consider this to be gross misconduct and immediate disciplinary action may be taken against you.

**Queries:** If you have any queries about this procedure you should contact the Headteacher

## **Further Support**

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line offers free advice and support to professionals with concerns about how child protection issues are being handled in their own or another organisation.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

If you believe children is at risk and our procedure is not sufficient or has not helped you can call to discuss your concerns. The number is 0800 028 0285

## **Monitoring and review**

This policy is the Headteacher's ongoing responsibility along with reviewing its effectiveness in consultation with the staff.

**Signed Headteacher:** Sally Cox

**Date:** 17/8/2022