



# The Stables Independent School

## Whistleblowing Policy

**This policy links directly to:**

Document	Area
The Stables policies	Anti-bullying Safeguarding inc. child protection Complaints Promoting Positive Relationships and Behaviour First aid Staff disciplinary and grievance procedures Equality and diversity

**This policy was reviewed and approved by the Proprietors in the Summer Term 2023.**

**It will be reviewed annually and approved by the Proprietors.**



**Aims and Scope** – The Stables Independent School has clear systems in place to:

- ♣ encourage employees to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice
- ♣ provide an avenue for employees to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken
- ♣ ensure that employees receive a response to their concerns and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied
- ♣ reassure employees that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if they have a reasonable belief that they may have made a disclosure in good faith

Employees may, in properly carrying out their duties, have access to, or come into contact with, information of a confidential nature. Their terms and conditions provide that except in the proper performance of their duties, employees are forbidden from disclosing or making use of, in any form whatsoever, such confidential information. However, the law allows employees to make a 'protected disclosure' of certain information. In order to be 'protected', a disclosure must relate to a specific subject matter (listed below) and the disclosure must also be made in an appropriate way.

If, in the course of employment, an employee becomes aware of information which he reasonably believes tends to show one or more of the following, he/she must use the Company's Disclosure Procedure set out below:

- that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm (see procedure 1.5)
- that a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- that a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he is subject
- that a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur
- that the health or safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered
- that the environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged
- that information tending to show any of the above is being, or is likely to be, deliberately concealed

By acting in such a manner staff ensure they are complying with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2009 which is the legal context within which whistleblowing sits.



## **Disclosure Procedure**

**All staff employed at The Stables Independent School are able to use this procedure.**

As a first step, information which an employee reasonably believes tends to show one or more of the above should promptly be shared with the Headteacher. This depends, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of the malpractice. For example, if you believe that the Headteacher of The Stables Independent School is involved, you should approach the Proprietors or the QA Manager of Clover Childcare Services, Steve Halliley. This will ensure prompt action is taken to address the situation.

These procedures, and the law, encourage employees to exhaust internal processes before considering any course of action external to the company. If, despite raising the concerns internally you do not feel the matter is being taken seriously or has not been adequately addressed you may choose to contact Ofsted on 0300 123 1231.

Complaints may be raised verbally or in writing. Staff who wish to make a written report are invited to use the following format:

- (a) The background and history of the concern (giving relevant dates)
- (b) The reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation.

Although you are not expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of an allegation, you will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are reasonable grounds for your concern.

Remember, the earlier you express the concern, the easier it is to take action.

Employees will suffer no detriment of any sort for making such a disclosure in accordance with this procedure. However, failure to follow this procedure may result in disclosed information losing its 'protected status'. Additionally, failure to raise your concerns may result in further harm to a child or young person and this may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you as you have neglected your duty to safeguard young people at all times. For further guidance in relation to this matter or concerning the use of the Disclosure Procedure generally, employees should speak in confidence to the Headteacher or the Proprietors.

## **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher, Sarah Porter, has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy. They will maintain a record of concerns raised and the outcomes (but in a form which does not endanger your confidentiality) and will report as necessary to Ofsted, or in the cases of safeguarding children to Norfolk Children's Services or LADO if the concern relates to the practice of a member of staff employed by the organisation.