



## **Grateley Primary School**

*A school where every child becomes a lifelong learner and realises their potential.*

### **WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

**Signed Chair of Governors** *Amelia Bridges*

**Reviewed: September 2022**

**Next Review: September 2023**

### **Aim**

The Governors and Head teacher are committed to delivery of a high quality education service to its pupils and expects high standards from their staff and contractors. In order to maintain these high standards a culture of openness and accountability is vitally important.

The aims of this policy are threefold:

- To encourage staff and other stakeholders to raise concerns made in good faith about malpractice or welfare/safeguarding within the school without fear of reprisal
- To reassure staff and other stakeholders that concerns will be taken seriously
- To provide information about how to raise concerns and explain how the Governors and the Local Education Authority will respond.

### **Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to all school employees and former employees, agency staff, voluntary staff, governors, parent helpers and contractors engaged by the School.

### **Whistle Blowing on Malpractice**

Malpractice covers a wide range of concerns. The types of activity that should be disclosed include, but **are not limited** to, the following:

- Physical, emotional or sexual abuse of pupils or staff
- Concerns around extremism
- Any safeguarding or child protection concern
- Financial maladministration
- Unauthorized use of School funds or financial impropriety
- Fraud and corruption
- Failure to comply with legal obligations
- Endangering of an individual's health & safety
- Breaches of health & safety procedures
- Damage to the environment or property
- A criminal offence
- Failure to follow financial and contract procedure rules
- Showing undue favour to a contractor or a job applicant
- Miscarriages of justice
- Deliberate concealment of information relating to any of the above

### How to Raise a Concern

- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a concern is expressed, the easier and sooner action can be taken.
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why.
- Meet the Head teacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (contact details can be found on the Health and Safety Notice Board and on the school website) so that clear details around the concern can be established.
- Ideally you should put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can.
- If your concern is about the Head Teacher then approach the Chair of Governors (contactable through the school office). If the Chair of Governors is not available or it is inappropriate to do so, contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) directly with details of your concern. They will then contact the governor designated to deal with concerns around the Head Teacher to decide on a course of action. Do not investigate or discuss outside the LADO as this may prejudice any further actions.
- Ensure you get a satisfactory response – **do not let matters rest**. If you feel that something has not been addressed, raise the matter with the Head Teacher and if still dissatisfied, depending on the nature of the concern follow the school's Complaints Procedure (on the school's website). Alternatively, refer externally either to the Local Authority through the Local Authority Designated Officer (staff allegations, safeguarding, child protection issues) or to the Children's Services District Manager Test Valley number through HCC Website).
- A member of staff, volunteer, community member or governor is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but you will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

### Advice & Support

The school recognises that staff may wish to seek advice and support from their professional association or trade union before blowing the whistle and you are strongly advised to do so. They may also wish to contact the employee support line - number displayed on the staff notice board. All concerns raised under this procedure will be treated seriously and a decision made about whether or not a more in depth investigation is appropriate. Depending upon the nature of the matter it may be referred to the external auditor, the police or appropriate external agency. The person to whom you reported your concern will be responsible for keeping you informed about the progress of the investigation and the action that has been taken, although you may not be told the outcome. The Head teacher and where appropriate a representative from the Governing Body will support you in this process and ensure that you are clear about what will happen.

The Head teacher, Governors and the LA will not tolerate harassment or victimization and may take action if you have not raised a concern in good faith.

### **Complaints & Grievances**

This policy should not be confused with other policies that exist for dealing with complaints or grievances and should be read alongside these.

### **Review & Operation of this Policy**

The Governors have overall responsibility for the operation of this policy, which will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure it is in line with Hampshire County Council guidelines. The governing body will check at least annually that staff have received and read a copy of this policy.

***Don't think 'what if I'm wrong?' – think 'what if I'm right!'***