

Yesodey Hatorah Girls Secondary School

Whistleblowing Policy



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Policy Statement

We are committed to conducting our business with honesty and integrity, and we expect all staff to maintain high standards in accordance with our Code of Conduct. However, all organisations face the risk of things going wrong from time to time, or of unknowingly harbouring illegal or unethical conduct. A culture of openness and accountability is essential in order to prevent such situations occurring or to address them when they do occur. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

Whistle blowing

What is whistle blowing? Whistle blowing is when a member of staff, contractor or agency staff discloses information relating to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at the school. Examples of whistle blowing may include:

- a) Criminal activity
- b) Miscarriages of justice
- c) Danger to health and safety
- d) Damage to the environment
- e) Failure to comply with any legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements
- f) Bribery
- g) Malpractice or ill treatment of children, adults or any forms of discrimination
- h) Negligence
- i) Breach of our internal policies and procedures including our Code of Conduct
- j) Conduct likely to damage our reputation
- k) Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information
- l) The deliberate concealment of any of the above matters

We want you to help us provide a safe service for people who depend on them.

How to raise a concern

1. You can tell your line manager, the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors directly. We hope that staff will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. However, if you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret. If it is necessary for anyone investigating your concern to know your identity, we will discuss this with you.
2. A fact finding investigation will be carried out to gather evidence.
3. We will arrange a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You may bring a colleague or union representative to any meetings under this policy. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.
4. We will take down a written summary of your concern and provide you with a copy after the meeting. We will also aim to give you an indication of how we propose to deal with the matter.
5. If appropriate the case may be referred to the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors.
6. Further investigation may lead to staff being suspended and disciplinary process or reported to the police or other agency or no further action is taken.
7. You will be informed of the outcome normally within 10 days.

If you are not happy with the outcome of the investigation at any stage, you can raise this with anyone on the list of useful numbers (at the end of this policy).

If you are still not happy with how the school dealt with the matter, or at any stage during the process, you can contact Public Concern at Work. They are an independent whistleblowing charity

who operate a free confidential helpline and can give you free legal advice. Contact details are on the list of useful numbers (at the end of this policy).

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator. It will very rarely if ever be appropriate to alert the media. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. Public Concern at Work also has a list of prescribed regulators for reporting certain types of concern.

Whistle blowing concerns usually relate to the conduct of our staff, but they may sometimes relate to the actions of a third party, such as a customer, supplier or service provider. The law allows you to raise a concern in good faith with a third party, where you reasonably believe it relates mainly to their actions or something that is legally their responsibility. However, we encourage you to report such concerns internally first. You should contact the relevant individual on the useful numbers (at the end of this policy for guidance).

What we expect from you

- All employees have a duty and responsibility to report any genuine suspicions of misconduct, corruption, fraud, serious irregularities or abuse.
- All employees are expected to comply with the Code of Conduct, see Staff Handbook
- All contract managers must make partners aware of the whistleblowing policy.

What you can expect from us

We are committed to stamping out any malpractice, fraud, corruption, harassment and any other actions which are illegal or not in the interests of the School.

We will:

- Take you seriously and take swift action to tackle any impropriety
- Investigate your concerns thoroughly
- Give you as much information as possible about the result of any investigation
- Give an explanation if a decision is made not to investigate further
- Take all reasonable action to protect you from any victimisation
- Do everything possible to protect your confidentiality

Protection and Support for Whistle Blowers

It is understandable that whistleblowers are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. We aim to encourage openness and will support staff who raise genuine concerns in good faith under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

- Staff must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a concern in good faith. Detrimental treatment includes dismissal, disciplinary action, threats or other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform [the Whistleblowing Officer] immediately. If the matter is not remedied you should raise it formally using our Grievance Procedure.
- Staff must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. Anyone involved in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. The school supports genuine whistle blowers. If you abuse this process by raising unfounded allegations maliciously, it will be viewed as a disciplinary matter.

Useful numbers

- Mr Bibleman Chairman Governors Tel 020 8802 1128
- The Learning Trust Tel 020 8820 7000
- Health and Safety Executive Tel 020 7556 2100

- The Data Protection Commissioner Tel 01625 545 745
- Public Concern at Work. Tel 020 7404 6609.

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