



## **WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY**

**November 2017**

**(Version 1)**

<b>Date approved by SNOMAC Directors</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> November 2017</b>
<b>Next review date</b>	<b>September 2018</b>
<b>Body responsible for review</b>	<b>Board of Directors</b>

# **Saint Nicholas Owen Catholic Multi Academy Company Whistle Blowing Policy**

**This Whistle Blowing Policy has been approved and adopted by Saint Nicholas Owen Catholic Multi Academy Company on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2016 and will be reviewed in September 2018.**

**Signed by Director of SNOCMAC (Academy Trust Company):**

**Academy to which this policy relates:**

**Signed by Principal for – St Ambrose Catholic Primary School:**

**Signed by Principal for – St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School:**

**Signed by Principal for – St Mary’s Catholic Primary School:**

**Signed by Principal for – St Wulstan’s Catholic Primary School:**

**Signed by Principal for – Hagley Catholic High School:**

**Signed by Principal for – Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary School:**

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Whistleblowing is the disclosure by staff of what they consider to be malpractice by a co-worker or manager. This malpractice may constitute any behaviour felt to be detrimental to the best interests of the School, its stakeholders and its employees. Specific examples of issues covered by the Whistleblowing Policy include:

1.1.1 Any unlawful act.

1.1.2 Failure to comply with any legal obligations or regulatory requirements.

1.1.3. Health and safety issues.

1.1.4. Damage to the environment.

1.1.5. Unauthorised use of public funds, to include financial fraud or mismanagement.

1.1.6. Fraud and corruption of any description.

1.1.7. Inappropriate or improper conduct (including bullying or harassment).

1.1.8. Serious failure to comply with appropriate professional standards.

1.1.9. Breach of the School’s Constitution or other policy or code of practice.

1.1.10. Discrimination of any kind.

1.1.11. Any form of unethical conduct, including unauthorised disclosure of confidential information.

1.2 A whistleblower is a person who raises a genuine concern relating to any of the above. If you have genuine concerns related to suspected wrongdoing or changes affecting any of our activities (a whistleblowing concern) you should report it under this policy.

- 1.3. The Whistleblowing Policy does not apply to raising grievances about an employee's personal situation with work. Any such concerns should be raised under the existing provisions for raising grievances.
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.
- 1.5. Provided that you act in good faith, and that you have a reasonable suspicion that the alleged malpractice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur, you can disclose your concerns, using this procedure, and be protected by law from victimization or dismissal. The law in question is the Public Interest Disclosure Act, which came into force in 1999. Although not strictly required by the Act, the School's internal procedures give effect to it. The School believes that having internal procedures is in everyone's interest.
- 1.6 If you are uncertain whether something is within the scope of this policy you should seek advice from the Accounting Officer whose contact details are at the end of this policy.

## **2. Aims of the Policy**

- 2.1. The aims of the School's Whistleblowing Policy are as follows:
  - 2.1.1. Encourage employees to feel confident about raising concerns and to question and act on those concerns;
  - 2.1.2. Provide ways for staff to raise concerns and receive feedback on any action taken as a result;
  - 2.1.3. Reassure staff that if they raise concerns in good faith and reasonably believe them to be true, they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation;
  - 2.1.4. Ensure that employees are aware of options available to them if they are dissatisfied with the School's initial response.

## **3. Who is covered by the Policy?**

- 3.1 The School's Whistleblowing Policy applies equally to all of the following groups:
  - 3.1.1. All employees (including part time and temporary staff);
  - 3.1.2. Officers;
  - 3.1.3. Agency staff working for the School;
  - 3.1.4. Consultants;
  - 3.1.5. Contractors and suppliers;
  - 3.1.6. Volunteers;
  - 3.1.7. Organisations working with the School under partnership arrangements;

### 3.1.8. Service users and stakeholders

## **4. What assurance does the Whistleblowing Policy provide?**

4.1 Individuals raising concerns under the Whistleblowing Policy will not be at risk of any form of retribution or sanction, including losing their job or contract with the School, provided that:

4.1.1. The disclosure is made in good faith, and;

4.1.2. There is a genuine and reasonable belief that the information, and any allegations contained in it, is substantially true, and;

4.1.3. The disclosure is not motivated by personal gain.

4.2 The School will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern. However, where matters that are known to be untrue are raised maliciously, it is likely that disciplinary action will be taken against perpetrators.

## **5. Making a Disclosure/Raising a Concern**

The School has established the following primary mechanisms for staff to report their concerns:

5.1.1. To make a disclosure either telephone or write to the Accounting Officer listed at the end of the policy. If writing, mark the envelope: 'Strictly Private and Confidential'. Do not email the Accounting Officer, as email is not a secure medium and must not be used.

5.1.2. The Accounting Officer will acknowledge receipt of your disclosure in writing, within 5 working days. They will also gather further information if need be, including by personal interview, at which you can be accompanied by an official of your trade union or professional association, or by a fellow colleague. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

5.1.3. Lines of communication for reporting fraud include an employee's line manager, Head of Department/Curriculum Area, Business Director, Principal, Chair of Academy Committee and Chair of the Board of Directors;

5.1.4. Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing;

5.1.5. Whilst anonymous allegations will be considered and action taken where appropriate, it is much more difficult to properly investigate matters raised anonymously. The Whistleblowing Policy is designed to protect staff raising genuinely held concerns and individuals utilising the provisions of the policy are encouraged to identify themselves. Obviously, feedback (where appropriate) relating to any investigation that has been undertaken can only be provided where contact details are known.

## **6. Confidentiality**

6.1 The School will treat your disclosure in confidence and only reveal your identity if absolutely necessary (e.g. if required in connection with legal action).

## **7. How will the School respond?**

7.1 The School's response will depend on the nature of the concern that has been raised.

7.2 In all instances, the School will:

7.2.1. Record and acknowledge the issue raised and refer it for investigation within five days of receiving the information.

7.2.2. Respect confidentiality. The School will do its best to protect your identity when you raise a concern and do not want your name to be disclosed. It must be appreciated, however, that this is not always possible. The investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by you may be required as part of the evidence. The person investigating the matter will be informed of any confidentiality requirements relating to the disclosure;

7.2.3. Decide on appropriate action e.g. Audit Services investigation, other internal investigation, and referral to the police or other external organisation;

7.2.4. Subject to any legal constraints, the relevant employee will normally be informed of the final outcome of any investigation undertaken.

7.2.5. Safeguarding issues will be reported to the appropriate Local Authority Safeguarding Board

## **8. Contact Details**

The Accounting Officer of St Nicholas Owen Catholic Multi Academy Company can be contacted at the address below:

Mrs C van Vliet  
Accounting Officer  
c/o Our Lady of Fatima Catholic  
Primary School  
Winchfield Drive  
Harborne  
Birmingham  
B17 8TR  
Tel 0121 429 2900

## **9. How can a concern be taken further?**

9.1 Where individuals are dissatisfied with action taken by the School in respect of issues raised under the Whistleblowing Policy, they should raise their concerns with The Chair of the Board of Directors, c/o Hagley Catholic High School, Brake Lane, Hagley, DY8 2XL. If they remain dissatisfied, the following organisations may be contacted for advice:

1. Director of Schools

3. The Charity Public Concern at Work

Birmingham Diocesan Education Service  
Don Bosco House  
Coventry Road  
Coleshill  
Birmingham  
B46 3EA  
Tel : 01675 464755

2. The National Audit Office

Whistleblowing hotline  
Tel: 020 7798 7999  
Email: [enquiries@nao.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@nao.gsi.gov.uk)

Public Concern at Work  
CAN Mezzanine  
7-14 Great Dover Street  
London  
SE1 4YR  
Tel: 020 7404 6609  
Email: [whistle@pcaw.org.uk](mailto:whistle@pcaw.org.uk)

4. Secretary of State for Education

Secretary of State  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London SW1P 3BT  
Tel : 020 7925 5000