



Whistleblowing Policy

January 2016

Approved by the Directors: January 2016

Reviewed annually

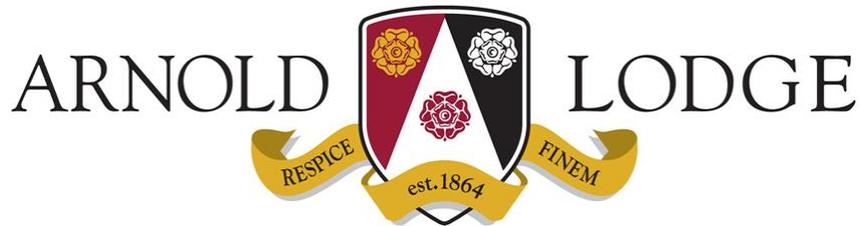
Next review date: August 2017

This policy is part of a portfolio of policies associated with 'Safeguarding' and must therefore, be read in conjunction with the other policies. All policies are available on the website or in school.

About this Policy

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (the "Act") places a legal responsibility on employers to ensure that matters of serious public concern can be addressed

This policy applies to all employees; however, the Act also covers those contractors working for the School on its premises. It also covers suppliers and those providing services under a contract to the School



Introduction

Arnold Lodge School has procedures in place to enable individuals to raise grievances about their own employment. This policy is intended to cover concerns that fall outside of grievance and other statutory reporting procedures and seeks to encourage you to raise your concerns - protected/qualifying disclosures - internally within the organisation.

Qualifying Disclosures

'Qualifying disclosures' are disclosures as set out below and which an individual reasonably believes is happening now, took place in the past or is likely to happen in the future:

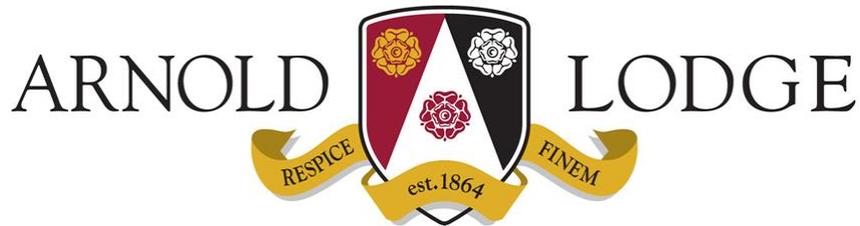
- any unlawful act, whether criminal or a breach of civil law
- miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur
- maladministration e.g. examination management
- breach of any statutory Code of Practice
- breach of, or failure to implement or comply with the school policy or procedure
- failure to comply with appropriate professional standards
- corruption or fraud including obtaining money (e.g. grants) without entitlement
- misuse of assets, equipment, vehicles, buildings computer hardware/software
- a danger to the health or safety of any individual
- failure to take reasonable steps to report and rectify any situation which is likely to give rise to significant avoidable cost, or loss of income, to the School or would have otherwise seriously prejudice the School
- abuse of power, or the use of the School's powers and authority for an unauthorised or ulterior purpose
- deliberate covering up of information relating to the above matters
- any concerns in relation to safeguarding. Staff must follow this policy if they have a concern that a disclosure or allegation of abuse has not been dealt with properly or has not been referred on to external agencies; or if they believe that another member of staff or other person working with children has displayed inappropriate behaviour towards a child.

An individual does not have to raise a grievance in order to make a 'protected disclosure'; however, if the employee intends to raise the matter as a grievance, this intention must be clearly stated.

Staff may approach external organisations (IAPS, ISI, Ofsted, Social Services, The Children's Commissioner, The Health and Safety Executive, The Environment Agency etc) depending on the nature of the issue raised.

Protected Disclosure

In making the disclosure, an individual must have a reasonable belief that the information disclosed shows one or more of the offences or breaches listed above. The belief need not be correct, but the individual must show that they held the belief and that it was a reasonable belief in the circumstances, at the time of the disclosure.



The School recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisals from those responsible for the malpractice. As far as possible the School will seek to respect the confidentiality and anonymity of the individual raising the concern and will seek to protect him/her from reprisals.

In this regard, the School will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation of the individual who has raised the concerns, nor will any attempt to prevent individuals from raising concerns in good faith be acceptable.

Raising a Concern (Protected Disclosure)

The earlier concerns are raised, the easier it is to take action. Concerns should be raised in writing and in the first instance with the Head teacher. However, should you feel unable to approach the Head due to the nature of the concern then then the concern should be raised with a Director of the School.

Investigation

The action taken by the School will depend on the nature of the concern. The matters raised may for example:

- be investigated internally,
- be referred to the Police, or other appropriate body
- be referred to an External Auditor, or form the subject of an independent inquiry

In order to protect individuals, the Head/Director will conduct initial enquiries to determine whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take.

Raising Unfounded or Malicious Concerns

If an allegation is made in good faith, but is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against the individual raising the concern. However, if an employee makes an allegation which – through the internal investigation process - is found to be malicious, mischievous or vexatious, or a disclosure made for personal gain, such actions will be considered as a disciplinary offence is likely to result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee.

Associated Documents

- Employee Handbook

Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored and reviewed annually.