



YAVNEH ACADEMY TRUST

POLICY ON WHISTLE BLOWING

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'Whistleblowing' Procedure

Reporting Illegal and Improper Conduct Procedure and Guidance for Staff

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Yavneh Academy Trust expects the highest standards of conduct from all employees in the Primary School and College and will treat seriously any concern that an employee may have about illegal or improper conduct.

1.2 Employees will be expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the Headteacher of each school any serious impropriety or breach of procedure.

1.3 This procedure is based on the model policy drawn up by Hertfordshire LA which was produced in consultation with the trade unions and professional associations.

2. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROCEDURE?

2.1 The procedure is designed to enable employees to notify the Headteacher of any reasonable suspicion of illegal or improper conduct. The procedure requires all employees to act responsibly to uphold the reputation of the school and to help maintain public confidence.

2.2 It is a procedure in which the Headteacher will be expected to act swiftly and constructively in the investigation of any concerns in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedure.

2.3 Concern about a colleague's professional capability should not be dealt with using this procedure.

3. WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

3.1 This procedure is not designed to replace or be used as an alternative to the school's grievance procedure, which should be used where an employee is only aggrieved about his/her own situation. Employees who are worried about wrong doing at work do not necessarily have a personal grievance.

3.2 Employees must act in good faith and must have reasonable grounds for believing the information to be accurate.

3.3 No employee who uses this procedure in good faith will be penalised for doing so. The school will not tolerate harassment and/or victimisation of any employee raising concerns.

3.4 An employee who is not sure whether the conduct he/she is concerned about does constitute illegal or improper conduct or is unsure about how to proceed can contact any of the names listed in section 7 for advice.

3.5 Financial regulations require any employee who suspects fraud, corruption or other financial irregularity to ensure this is reported to the Chair of the Finance Committee for possible investigation. Normally you must first report any suspicion of such an irregularity to the Headteacher, who will in turn report it to the Chair of the Finance Committee.

4. MECHANISM FOR RAISING CONCERNS

4.1 Where the issue concerns your Headteacher or, having made your report, you believe he/she has failed to take appropriate action, then you should bring it to the attention of the Executive Headteacher (Staff in the Primary School) or the Chair of Governors (Staff in the secondary School).

4.2 Employees who feel unable to follow this route, for whatever reason, have the option of contacting one of the names listed in section 7.

4.3 Depending on the nature of the concern the complainant will be asked to justify and support their claim. Normally the complainant will be asked to do this in writing. It will therefore be helpful to note down any facts and dates as they happen.

4.4 Employees who want to use the procedure but feel uneasy about it may wish to consult their trade union initially and bring a friend or trade union representative along to any discussions, so long as the third party is independent of the issue.

4.5 Where anonymity is requested efforts will be made to meet the request where appropriate but that might not always be possible. The earlier and more open the expression of concern the easier it will be to take appropriate action.

4.6 Each case will be investigated thoroughly with the aim of informing the complainant of the outcome of any investigation as quickly as possible.

5. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IF AN ISSUE IS RAISED WITH A SENIOR MEMBER OF STAFF?

5.1 If a senior member of staff (other than the Headteacher) is approached by a colleague on a matter of concern as defined in this document, he/she should be advised to take the matter to the Headteacher.

6. EXAMPLES OF ILLEGAL AND/OR IMPROPER CONDUCT

- fraudulent or improper use of the school's money or assets
- abuse of pupils or of other employees
- dangerous practices at work
- corruptly receiving any gift or advantage
- allowing private interests and those of the school to conflict.

7. NAMES TO CONTACT (see 3.4 and 4.2)

EFA (for financial concerns) - 0300 303 8610

Or any of the following trade union and professional association representatives:

UNISON

Tel: 01992 556260

NAHT

Tel: 01923 263174

ACSL

Tel: 0116 2991122

NEU

Tel: 03458118111

NASUWT

Tel: 01923 224025

This policy will be reviewed by the Personnel Committee every year or earlier if necessary.

Date: June 2024

Date of review: June 2026