



The Bournemouth School of English

Whistleblowing Policy

protecting the rights of our employees to raise concerns

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Applies to: All members of staff

Context: Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within the workplace.

However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the company. They may also fear harassment or victimisation.

In these circumstances it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice.

Last updated: June 2018

To be reviewed: Annually

Statement

The Bournemouth School of English is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity, and accountability.

An important aspect of accountability and transparency is a mechanism to enable staff and other members of the School to voice concerns in a responsible and effective manner. Should someone discover information which they believe shows serious malpractice or wrongdoing within the organisation, this information should be disclosed internally without fear of reprisal.

This may include, but is not limited to:

- someone's health and safety being in danger;
- damage to the environment;
- a criminal offence;
- not obeying the law;
- covering up wrongdoing;
- misusing public funds;
- actions that negatively affect the welfare of children.

This policy aims to:

- encourage you to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice;
- provide avenues for you to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken;
- ensure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue further action if you are not satisfied;
- reassure you that you will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if you have a reasonable belief that you have made any disclosure in good faith.

Furthermore, the Public Interest Disclosure Act, which came into effect in 1999, also gives legal protection to employees against being dismissed or penalised by their employers as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns.

Raising a concern

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by an investigation, no action will be taken against you. Disciplinary action may only be taken against you if you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously, or for personal gain.

If you have a concern, you should aim to report it internally first before using an external body. Making a report to an external person should only be undertaken:

- if you have reason to believe the matter will be covered up internally;
- if you have reason to believe you will be treated unfairly by raising the issue internally;
- if you have raised the matter before, but the concern hasn't been dealt with.

Process

We will acknowledge receipt of any concern in the same manner in which it was made; you should expect an acknowledgement within 48 hours. A written record of the concern will be kept but will not form part of your staff file. We will investigate and respond to your concern within an appropriate time period - the exact period will depend on the type of concern raised.

We may not be able to divulge the results of an investigation in full, but we will aim to give you as much information as possible to ensure that you are satisfied that a professional and thorough investigation has taken place.

Confidentiality

We will treat any disclosure or concern in a confidential and sensitive manner. Your identity will be kept confidential as long as it does not hinder or frustrate any investigation. However, an investigation process may be forced to reveal the source of the information, and you may be asked to provide a statement as part of the evidence required.

Anonymous allegations can appear less credible, but will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Who you could contact

One of the School's managers; one of the School's directors

English UK

Citizen's Advice Bureau or the Local Authority; the LSCB for example

a whistleblowing charity such as Public Concern At Work