

Whistleblowing Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1. All organisations face the risk of things going wrong or of unknowingly harbouring malpractice. St. John's is committed to conducting our business with honesty and integrity and we believe that we have a duty to identify malpractice and take the appropriate measures to remedy it when it is identified. By encouraging a culture of openness within the organisation, we believe that we can help prevent malpractice; prevention is better than cure. That is the aim of this policy.

1.2. This policy covers all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, bank workers, volunteers and agency workers.

1.3. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it from any time.

1.4. St. John's encourages staff to raise issues that are of concern to them. Employees may be worried that by reporting such issues they will be opening themselves up to victimisation or detrimental treatment or risk their job security. However, St John's is committed to ensuring that this is not the case and this policy is designed to give all employees that protection when raising a genuine concern, even if they turn out to be mistaken. There is no question of an employee having to prove anything, as long as a genuine concern is held.

1.5. By knowing about malpractice at an early stage, St. John's will be enabled to take the necessary steps to safeguard the interests of all learners and staff and to protect the Organisation.

1.6. It is the responsibility of all staff to raise any malpractice witnessed or suspected. Knowingly failing to report malpractice may result in disciplinary action.

1.7. If an employee has a complaint about their own personal circumstances, such as the way they have been treated at work, then the Grievance Procedure must be followed. Concerns about malpractice within the organisation must be raised by following the procedure outlined in this policy.

2. What is Whistle Blowing?

2.1.1 Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work. This may include:

- A criminal offence
- The breach of a legal or professional obligation, or regulatory requirement
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2.2 A **whistle-blower** is a person who raises a genuine concern relating to any of the above.

3. Raising a Whistle Blowing concern

3.1 We hope that in many cases the employee will be able to raise any concerns with their line manager. This may be either verbally or in writing.

3.2 In the event that the employee feels unable to inform their line manager for any reason, the matter must be raised with the Executive Principal of St John's College.

3.3 However, where the matter is more serious or the employee feels that their line manager or Executive Principal of St John's College have not addressed their concerns or the employee prefers not to raise it with them for any reason, the matter must be raised with the CEO.

3.4 If an employee is uncertain whether something is within the scope of this policy, advice must be sought from the Head of HR.

3.5 There is a helpline available for independent help, support and advice on **08000 724725 (Speak up – formerly Whistleblowing Helpline)**. Any information disclosed to the helpline will be treated in the strictest confidence and any potential whistle blower will remain anonymous at that point in the process.

3.6 Advice can also be sought from the independent whistle blowing charity, **Protect**, the contact details for which are set out at the end of this policy.

4. Response

a. After the concern has been raised, a meeting will be arranged with the employee as soon as possible in order to discuss their concern. The employee may bring a colleague or union representative to any meetings under this policy. The companion must respect the confidentiality of the disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

b. A written record of the key points of the employee's concerns will be taken and the employee will be provided with a copy after the meeting.

An initial assessment will be carried out to determine the scope of any investigation required. Usually this will involve making internal enquiries, but it may be necessary to carry out an investigation at a later stage, which may be formal or informal, depending on the nature of the concern raised. Staff may be required to attend additional meetings to provide further information.

c. As far as possible, the employee will be kept informed of the decisions we take and the outcome of any enquiries and investigations we carry out. However, the organisation is not able to inform the employee of any matters that would infringe our duty of confidentiality to others. Information about the investigation must be treated as

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