



BREACC – Brazilian Educational and Cultural Centre
St James’s RC School
260, Stanley Road – Twickenham – TW2 5NP – London
Registered Charity Number 1087726
Email: info@breacc.com - website www.breacc.org.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/breaccbook
Instagram: www.instagram.com/breaccschool

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

BREACC – Brazilian Educational and Cultural Centre is committed to the highest possible standards of honesty, openness and accountability and we encourage all employees and others who have serious concerns to voice those concerns.

It is recognised that most cases will proceed on a confidential basis.

Employees are often the first to realise that something is wrong.

BREACC – Brazilian Educational and Cultural Centre believes that it is the responsibility of each member of staff to realise that they not only have the right, but also a moral duty to report any actions or omissions.

BREACC – Brazilian Educational and Cultural Centre also recognises and appreciates that staff who raise concerns regarding malpractice or wrongdoing are an asset to the school, and not a threat. This policy makes it clear that they can raise a concern without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. The Whistleblowing policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns rather than overlooking a problem or “blowing the whistle” outside.

The policy applies to all employees, whether full time or part time, permanent or temporary, contractors working for the school e.g. agency staff or builders. It also covers providers of work, services and appliances, including external contractors.

The Purpose of the Policy:

- To encourage employees to feel confident in raising serious concerns, to question and act upon their concerns about practice
- To provide employees with a method of raising concerns and receive feedback on how this is being followed up
- To ensure employees receive a response to their concerns and they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied
- To reassure employees that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if they have reasonable belief that they have made any disclosure in good faith.



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Rationale and Accountability

The school operates within legal requirements and regulations and expects all employees to co-operate in this by adhering to all laws, regulations, policies and procedures.

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk.

Remember it is often the most vulnerable children or young person who is targeted.

These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

SCOPE

The Whistleblowing policy is intended to cover concerns which fall outside the scope of other procedures including:

- Conduct which is an offence or breach of the law
- Disclosure related to miscarriages of justice
- Dangerous procedures and practice risking Health and Safety, including risks to the public as well as employees
- Damage to the environment
- Dangerous practices
- Practice which falls below established standards or practice
- Action which is contrary to the code of conduct for employees
- Sexual or physical abuse of pupils or others
- Other unethical conduct



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CONCERNS

Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice and behaviour.

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort made not to reveal the staff member's identity.

Reasons for 'whistleblowing'

- To prevent worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To safeguard children
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

What stops people from 'whistleblowing'

- Starting a chain of events which spiral
- Disrupting work or events
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear or repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

How to raise a concern

- Try to be clear exactly what is concerning you and why.
- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken.
- Ideally you should put your concern in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can.
- Approach your immediate manager, Coordinator, Director or a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but you will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for concern.
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response - don't let matters rest.
- Don't think what if I am wrong? - think what if I am right?



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How the school will respond

- Advice will be taken to decide whether an investigation is appropriate or should be considered under the scope of other internal procedures (e.g. Grievance, Child Protection) or external bodies (e.g. Police).
- School will attempt to ensure confidentiality but cannot promise to do so.
- If urgent action required, this will take place before investigation.
- Within 10 days, the manager will write to the employee recognising concern, outlining how it will be dealt with, advise whether initial enquiries have been made, estimate time scales and offer the employee personal support and inform them if the concern will be investigated further, if not, why not?
- If an employee is unsatisfied with these outcomes, s/he should contact the Director, the Local Education Officer or Police. The unreasonable and unjustifiable raising of issues on a wider basis (e.g. the Press) will result in disciplinary procedures.
- As a result of the outcome of an investigation, working practices may be changed to ensure that a similar situation does not occur again.
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FURTHER ADVICE AND SUPPORT

This policy is intended to provide members of staff with an avenue to raise concerns internally, however the NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise an issue with their employer or feel that genuine concerns are not being addressed.

Staff can call the NSPCC Whistleblowing hotline on;

0800 028 0285 - 8am - 8pm - Mon – Fri – Or Email; help@nspcc.org.uk

The Public Interest Disclosure Act also sets out a number of bodies to which protected disclosures can be made. Employees should be aware that going directly to the press may limit their protection under the Public Interest Disclosures Act and they could therefore be subject to disciplinary action. An employee considering such a course of action is strongly advised to seek prior advice from a trade union or independent organisation such as Public Concern at Work (www.pcaaw.co.uk).

It is recognised that “whistleblowing” can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from the Coordinator and Director.



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MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The purpose of monitoring is to assess whether:

- The policy is being used appropriately
- Concerns are being handled and investigated properly
- There are patterns of concern across the school
- The policy has been effective in identifying malpractice
- More needs to be done to raise awareness of this policy

This policy should be read in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Staff Handbook and Disciplinary policies.

Last updated

November/2020