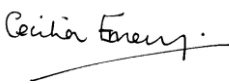




LOWTHER ENDOWED SCHOOL

WHISTLEBLOWING CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING POLICY

Approved by:	
Name:	Cecilia Emery
Position:	Chair of Governors
Signed:	
Date:	12 th September 2023
Review date:	September 2026

REVIEW SHEET

Each entry in the table below summarises the changes to this Policy and procedures made since the last review.

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision
1	Original based on Westmorland and Furness procedure (April 2023), amended to reflect Lowther Endowed School	September 2023

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[KAHSC Managing low-level concerns raised in relation to teachers \(including supply teachers\), other staff, volunteers and contractors \(flowchart\)](#)

[KAHSC Model Low Level Concern report form](#)

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1. About this Policy

This policy is a general Whistleblowing Policy. Specific procedures relating to whistleblowing concerning child protection or safeguarding can be found in the School's Child Protection Policy.

Lowther Endowed School (The School) is committed to the highest standards of honesty, integrity and accountability in carrying out its functions and expects the same high standards from all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, casual workers and agency workers.

Any suspected wrongdoing should be reported as soon as possible in line with this policy.

Any prospective 'whistleblower' can seek support from their Trade Union either before raising a concern or at any time during a concern being considered under this policy. This policy covers and explains the protection and support that is available for 'whistleblowers'.

The Governing Body is responsible for approving and monitoring this policy will receive an annual report on the operation of the policy.

2. What is Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to any activities that The School is engaged in. It covers the following specific wrongdoing/practices:

- a criminal offence
- breach of any legal obligation
- a miscarriage of justice
- danger to the health and safety of any individual
- damage to the environment
- the deliberate concealment of information about any of the above.

Whistleblowing is for disclosures that are in the public interest, it is not to be used for raising complaints relating to an employee's own personal circumstances or treatment at work. In those cases, employees should use the grievance procedure or other appropriate procedure.

3. How to raise a concern

A whistleblowing concern should be raised with the Head teacher or if this is not possible, the Chair of Governors. If there are specific reasons why you are unable to report your concerns either to the Head teacher or Chair of Governors, there are named contacts at the end of this policy to whom you may make a referral. You must advise the person you report to that you are making a disclosure under the School's Whistleblowing Policy. A record of all whistleblowing concerns will be maintained.

The Head teacher, Chair of Governors or other named person will arrange a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You may bring a companion (eg work colleague or union representative) to any meetings under this policy. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation. The concern will then be investigated under this policy.

4. Confidentiality

We hope that staff will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. Completely anonymous disclosures are often very difficult to investigate. If you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret and only reveal it where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern or if required for legal reasons.

5. External Disclosures

The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. "Protect" operates an independent and confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

6. Protection and Support for Whistleblowers

The School aims to encourage openness and will support whistleblowers who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

Whistleblowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a genuine concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the Head teacher, Chair of Governors or other named person immediately.

You must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. If you are involved in such conduct, you may be subject to disciplinary action.

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by an investigation, no action will be taken against you. However, if you make a false allegation maliciously, disciplinary action may be taken against you. "Protect" operates a confidential helpline providing support and advice. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

7. A collective responsibility to report concerns

There is a responsibility for all staff to notify and report any issues of serious concern. Failure to do so may have a negative impact on children or staff at the School, the School's reputation or impact on the conduct of an individual. As a result, failure to declare or report such concern could be considered a disciplinary matter.

8. Contacts

You should raise concerns with:

Head teacher – Carla Weild

Chair of Governors

If it is not possible or appropriate for you to speak with either the Head teacher or Chair of Governors then the following contacts should be used:

Westmorland and Furness Council

Linda Jones, Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer

Email: linda.jones@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

Pam Duke, Section 151 (Chief Finance) Officer, Director of Resources

Email: pam.duke@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

Richard McGahon, Head of Internal Audit

Email: richard.mcgahon@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

For independent advice contact:

Protect (Independent whistleblowing charity, formerly "public concern at work") Helpline: (020) 3117 2520

Email: whistle@protect-advice.org.uk Website: www.protect-advice.org.uk

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years.