

Introduction

Most people, at one time or another, have concerns about what is happening at work. Usually these concerns are easily resolved. However, when they are about unlawful conduct, financial malpractice or dangers to the public or the environment or harassment or misbehaviour at work, it can be difficult to know what to do.

You may be worried about raising such issues or may want to keep the concerns to yourself, perhaps feeling it is none of your business or that it is only a suspicion. You may feel that raising the matter would be disloyal to colleagues, managers or to the school. You may decide to say something but find that you have spoken to the wrong person or raised the issue in the wrong way and are not sure what to do next.

Bigland Green Primary School takes very seriously any form of malpractice and has introduced this procedure to enable staff to raise their concerns about such malpractice at an early stage and in the right way.

If something is troubling you, which you think the school should know about or look into, please use this procedure. If you are aggrieved about your personal position, the Grievance Procedure, which is available from the Headteacher or the school office, is available to you. However, this Whistleblowing Procedure is also available for concerns about your personal position where you are uneasy about using the Grievance Procedure, as well as where the interests of others or of the school itself is at risk.

Bigland Green's assurances to you

Your safety

The Governing Body and the School Leadership are committed to this policy. If you raise a genuine concern under this Policy, you will not be at risk of losing your job or suffering any form of retribution as a result. Provided you are acting in good faith, it does not matter if you are mistaken.

Your confidence

The school will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern. However, we recognise that you may nonetheless want to raise a concern in confidence under this Policy. If you ask to protect your identity by keeping your confidence, it will not be disclosed without your consent. If the situation arises where the concern raised cannot be resolved without disclosing your identity (for instance because your evidence is needed in court), it will be discussed with you first.

How to raise a concern

If you have a concern about malpractice, we hope you will feel able to raise it first with your Line Manager. This may be done orally or in writing. If you feel unable to raise the matter with your Line Manager, for whatever reason, please raise the matter with the Headteacher. Please be clear if you want to raise the matter in confidence so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

If these channels have been followed and you still have concerns, or if you feel that the matter is so serious that you cannot discuss it with any of the above, please contact:

Director of Children's Services at Mulberry Place (Tel. 020 7364 3205)

The Director of Children’s Services or the Chair of the Governing Body¹ should also be contacted if the concern is directly linked to the Headteacher.

If you are unsure whether to use this procedure or you want independent advice at any stage you may contact the Local Authority on 020 7364 5000 or seek advice from your professional body.

How we will handle the matter

Once you have raised your concern, the school will look into it and decided on the initial actions. This may involve an internal inquiry or a more formal investigation. You will be given details of the lead person and kept informed of any developments. If you request, the school will write to you summarising your concern and setting out how we propose to handle it.

When you raise the concern you may be asked how you think the matter might best be resolved. If you do have any personal interest in the matter, it should be disclosed at the outset. If your concern falls more properly within the Grievance Procedure you will be informed.

While the purpose of this Policy is to enable the school to investigate possible malpractice and take appropriate steps to deal with it, you will be given as much feedback as possible. If requested, the school will confirm its response in writing. However, the school may not be able to disclose the precise action taken because of confidentiality.

If you are not satisfied

If you are unhappy with the response you get, remember you can go to the other levels and bodies detailed in this policy. Whilst it cannot be guaranteed that the school will respond to all matters in the way that you might wish, the school will try to handle the matter fairly and properly. By using this policy, you will help the school achieve this.

Date approved	Signature	Review date
May 2021		As required

¹ The Chair of the Governing Body can be contacted via email, postal letter or telephone. Please ask the school office for the contact details that are also available on the school website.