All staff at BSM must feel that they work in a safe and supportive environment where the well-being of students and staff is paramount. This safe and supportive environment must extend to include the ability for staff to raise concerns about events and incidents that make them feel uncomfortable or where they are concerned that staff behaviour may be inappropriate.

A staff member might be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express the concern out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or student or another member of staff continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. It is often the most vulnerable students who are targeted. These students need someone to safeguard their welfare.

BSM staff must respond by thinking: ‘what if I am right – rather than - what if I am wrong’ and ‘it can happen here’

**Reasons for whistleblowing:**

Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour in order to:

* Prevent the problem worsening or widening
* Protect or reduce risks to others
* Prevent becoming personally implicated

**Key facts**:

* Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing
* Staff who ‘blow the whistle’ on those suspected of wrongdoing will be protected from intimidation or victimisation or any other detriment as a result of reporting suspected wrongdoing
* Staff should make an internal report in the first instance to the relevant member of SLT
* Reports to external bodies may not be protected if it is later found that an internal report should have been made
* Reports made maliciously or in bad faith may lead to disciplinary action

**What stops people from whistleblowing?:**

* Concern over starting a chain of events which may then spiral
* Disrupting their work or projects
* Fear of getting it wrong
* Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
* Fear of not being believed

Staff should use this Policy when they suspect wrongdoing within school. Whilst this is not an exhaustive list, some examples of wrongdoing are:

* Actions which endanger the health and safety of others or the environment
* Bribery or corruption
* Criminal activity
* Fraud or other financial irregularities
* Failure to comply with legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements
* Improper conduct or unethical behaviour
* Misuse of sensitive information
* Attempts to conceal any of the above
* Discrimination
* Bullying

**How to raise a concern:**

* The concern, suspicion or uneasiness, should be voiced as soon as possible, ideally to a member of the SLT. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner it is possible for action to be taken.
* Pinpoint the practice that is of concern and why it is of concern
* Put the concerns in writing to the DSL or the Principal
* Make sure a satisfactory response is received - don’t let matters rest
* If the concern is about the Principal, speak to the Chair of the Board of Governors

**Anonymous disclosures:**

This policy encourages employees to put their name to a disclosure, whenever possible. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful but will be considered at the discretion of the Principal or Chair of the Board of Governors if the concern is about the Principal (board@bsm.schoool)

In exercising this discretion the factors to be taken into account would include:

a) the seriousness of the issues raised

b) the credibility of the concern and

c) the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources

**Further action:**

* SLT will investigate the issue, establishing whether or not there are reasons for concern and deal with the issue appropriately as a result
* SLT aims to resolve the issue within two working weeks
* Appropriate feedback will be given to the whistleblower

A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

Associated Policies:

Antibribery & Corruption Policy

Code of Conduct (Staff)

Acceptable Use Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Managing Allegation Against Staff

Concerns & Complaints Policy