



PRIORY SCHOOL
EDGBASTON

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

STATUTORY

Trustee Committee:	Risk & Compliance	
Date Approved:	September 2026	
Next of Review:	September 2028	
Member of Staff Responsible:	Leanne Flood, Headteacher	
Trustee Overseer:	Deidre Mattison	
Intended Audience:	Employees, Parents, Visitors and Volunteers	
Relevance:	Whole School	Yes
	Early Years	Yes
	Preparatory	Yes
	Seniors	Yes)
Access:	Website	Yes
	Internal	Yes
	Restricted	No

Our Mission Statement

Priory School is a thriving, co-educational independent school founded upon a rich Catholic heritage which welcomes those from all faiths and none.

In partnership with parents and guardians we provide a nurturing, family-based ethos, alongside high-standards of teaching and learning, enabling all pupils to achieve their potential.

We embrace diversity and interfaith understanding alongside awareness of environmental and global issues, in response to the needs of our time.

The Governors and staff at Priory School are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors, regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional or cultural needs.

The Governors, staff and pupils are committed to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils and staff.

To meet the needs of our school community, all our policies, including this policy, can be made available on different formats such as different font sizes or styles, colour, or alternate languages.

The Governing Council understands it has responsibility for ensuring the effective oversight of this policy and will assess, evaluate and review as necessary.

Whistle Blowing Policy to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children

- Priory School has adopted this policy and the accompanying procedure on whistleblowing to enable members of staff to raise concerns internally and in a confidential fashion about fraud, malpractice, health and safety, criminal [activity](#) miscarriages of justice, [damage to the environment](#), and failure to comply with legal obligations, [unlawful](#) or unethical conduct. The policy also provides if necessary, for such concerns to be raised outside the organisation.
- This policy should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Low-Level Concerns Policy and the procedures for managing allegations against staff. Whistleblowing arrangements form part of the school's wider safeguarding framework and provide an alternative route for reporting concerns where staff feel unable to use, or are dissatisfied with, normal reporting procedures

Elements of the Policy

Priory's policy on whistleblowing is intended to demonstrate that Priory School:

- Will not tolerate malpractice.
- Respects the confidentiality of staff raising concerns and will provide procedures to maintain confidentiality so far as is consistent with progressing the issues effectively.
- Will provide the opportunity to raise concerns outside of the normal line management structure where this is appropriate.
- Will invoke the School's disciplinary policy and procedure in the case of false or malicious, vexatious or frivolous allegations.
- Will provide a clear and simple procedure for raising concerns, which is accessible to all members of staff.

Procedure

- This procedure is separate from the School's adopted procedures regarding grievances. Individuals should not use the whistleblowing procedure to raise grievances about their personal employment situation.
- This procedure is to enable members of staff to express a legitimate concern regarding suspected malpractice within the School.
- Malpractice is not easily defined; however, it includes allegations of fraud, financial irregularities, corruption, bribery, dishonesty, acting contrary to the staff code of ethics, criminal activities, or failing to comply with a legal obligation, a miscarriage of justice, or creating or ignoring a serious risk to health, safety or the environment. The whistle blowing policy is designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and relates to any concerns with regards to safeguarding, such as inefficient or ineffective practice, such as on the part of the DSL.
- Whistleblowing is very different from a complaint or a grievance. The term 'whistleblowing' generally applies when you are acting as a witness to misconduct or malpractice that you have observed and which threatens other people.

Early Years Foundation Stage

In accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Priory School has appropriate whistleblowing procedures in place for all staff, volunteers, students and contractors working within the Early Years provision. These procedures enable concerns about poor, unsafe or ineffective safeguarding practice to be reported promptly and without fear of reprisal.

All staff will receive information regarding the school's whistleblowing procedures as part of their induction and safeguarding training. Staff are expected to raise concerns where they believe safeguarding procedures

are not being followed, where concerns regarding a child have not been appropriately acted upon, or where the conduct of an adult may place children at risk.

The school will ensure that all concerns are taken seriously, investigated proportionately and, where appropriate, referred to external agencies. Whistleblowing arrangements are also reflected within the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Whistleblowing and Allegations Against Adults

Whistleblowing arrangements may be used where a member of staff has concerns regarding the conduct of an adult working in or on behalf of the school, particularly where they believe that safeguarding concerns, allegations, or low-level concerns are not being appropriately managed under the procedures set out in Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should ordinarily follow the school's procedures for managing allegations and low-level concerns relating to adults. However, where a member of staff believes that safeguarding concerns are being disregarded, minimised, mishandled or concealed, or where they feel unable to raise concerns through ordinary management channels, they should use the whistleblowing procedures outlined in this policy.

This includes concerns regarding:

- failures to follow safeguarding procedures;
- concerns about safeguarding culture;
- behaviour by an adult that may meet the harms threshold;
- repeated low-level concerns that may indicate a pattern of unsafe behaviour;
- failures to refer concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), children's social care or other relevant agencies where appropriate.
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Staff may also seek independent advice from the **NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line** where they believe internal procedures have not resulted in appropriate action.

Confidentiality

- Individuals who wish to raise a concern under this procedure are entitled to have the matter treated confidentially and we will make every effort to keep your identity secret. In the interests of complete transparency, if it is necessary for anyone investigating your concern to know your identity, we will discuss this with you in advance if disclosure of your identity is necessary, except in rare cases where prior notice is not possible (for example, urgent police involvement)."
- In order to preserve confidentiality it may be appropriate that concerns are raised orally rather than in writing, although members of staff are encouraged to express their concern in writing wherever possible. If there is evidence of criminal activity, then the Police will in all cases be informed.
- We do not encourage staff to make disclosures anonymously, although we will make every effort to investigate anonymous disclosures. You should be aware that proper investigation may be more difficult or impossible if we cannot obtain further information from you. It is also more difficult to establish whether any allegations are credible.

Safeguarding for Whistleblowers and Reporting to a School Governor

- If a member of staff reports a concern to the Headteacher, then he or she will be protected from any criticism or adverse comments from colleagues. However, the person reporting the concern should not speak to other members of staff or to anyone outside the school about it. This is in order to avoid rumour and gossip.
- Any instance of a member of staff criticising or intimidating a colleague for whistleblowing will be treated as misconduct and dealt with accordingly.

- If you bring a concern to the Headteacher about a safeguarding or child protection issue and you do not think he has treated it sufficiently seriously, then you may take your concern to a school Governor without informing the Headteacher of your intention to do so. If a member of staff takes their concern to a Governor after that, he or she will have the support of the Headteacher in doing so. If a member of staff has good reason to believe that the Headteacher is guilty of hurting a child in any way, then this must be reported to the Chair of Governors, giving the detailed grounds for concern without consulting the headteacher in the first instance. If you have a concern about how the Designated Safeguarding Lead has dealt with a situation, or not dealt with a situation, you may refer your concern to the Headteacher. You can also call the Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS) Team directly on 0121 303 1888.

It is important that staff at Priory School have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they are unhappy with anything.

The Investigation:

- A member of staff will be at liberty to express their concern to the Headteacher.
- Any concern raised will be investigated thoroughly and in a timely manner, and appropriate corrective action will be pursued.
- However, sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent us proving specific details of the outcome of the investigation, or any disciplinary action taken as a result. You should treat any information about the investigation as confidential.
- A member of staff who is not satisfied that their concern is being properly dealt with will have a right to raise it in confidence with the Governors.

External Procedures:

- 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.
- It will very rarely if ever be appropriate to alert the media. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external.
- The independent whistleblowing charity, Protect, operates a confidential helpline. They also have a list of prescribed regulators for reporting certain types of concern. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

False Malicious Accusations

If a whistleblower has made false allegations, maliciously, the employee may be dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.

Protection from Reprisal or Victimisation:

No member of staff will suffer a detriment or be disciplined for raising a genuine and legitimate concern, providing that they do so following the Whistleblowing procedures.

Independent Advice:

Independent advice on whistleblowing may be obtained from the charity, Protect. Whistleblowing Advice Line: [020 3117 2520](tel:02031172520) . Email: info@protect-advice.org.uk Website: www.protect-advice.org.uk

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the Headteacher.

- Reviewed and Revised by SMU April 2016
- Reviewed by JC November 2018
- Reviewed by JC January 2021
- Reviewed by JC September 2022
- Reviewed by JC September 2023
- Reviewed by JC September 2024
- Reviewed by BD September 2025
- Reviewed by LF September 2026