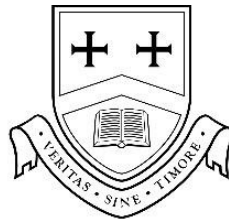


Whistleblowing Policy



CATERHAM
SCHOOL



CATERHAM
PREP

Policy Author:	Director of People
Date Reviewed By Author:	September 2024
Next Review Due:	September 2025

**PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE ACT (PIDA) 1998, (WHISTLEBLOWING)
POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

POLICY

Caterham School encourages a free and open culture in its relationships with employees, parents, pupils and all people with whom it engages. In particular, Caterham recognises that effective and honest communication is essential if any malpractice is to be effectively dealt with.

This policy is designed to provide guidance to all those who work with or within the School who may from time to time feel that they need to raise certain issues relating to the management of the School or the care of its pupils, with someone in confidence.

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

PROCEDURE

Subject Matters of Disclosure

1. This policy will apply in cases where you genuinely believe that one of the following sets of circumstances is occurring, has occurred or may occur within the School:
 - a. that a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
 - b. that a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he or she is subject
 - c. that a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur
 - d. that the health and safety and/or welfare of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered this includes any incident relating to child protection
 - e. that the environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged
 - f. that information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding paragraphs has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed.

2. While it is not necessary that you prove the malpractice or misconduct that you are alleging, but may simply raise a reasonable suspicion, please note that you will not be protected from the consequences of making such a disclosure if, by doing so, you commit a criminal offence if it is made in good faith.

If you wish to raise or discuss any issues that might fall into the above category, you should contact the Headmaster or Prep Headmaster, Chief Operating Officer or Director of People who will treat the matter in confidence. Your disclosure will be acknowledged within seven days and you will be given feedback within the timescales of the relevant procedure used for investigation or within three months.

In any case relating to the protection of children please refer to the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy; the Designated Safeguarding Team Lead is Louise Fahey at the Senior School, Rebecca Moore at the Prep School and Jo Cole at the Pre-Prep School. If your concern relates to Safeguarding and an adult in the school, you must immediately speak to Ceri Jones,

Headmaster. If your concern relates to the Headmaster you may refer to the Chair of Trustees who is Monisha Shah. (ChairOfTrustees@caterhamschool.co.uk)

It is likely that further investigation will be necessary and you may be required to attend a disciplinary or investigative hearing as a witness. Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that your working environment and/or working relationships are not prejudiced by the fact of your disclosure.

3. If you reasonably believe that the relevant failure (i.e. one of the set of circumstances listed above) relates wholly or mainly to the conduct of a person other than your employer or any other matter for which a person other than the School has legal responsibility, then you should make that disclosure to that other person. You may make such a disclosure to an appropriate regulatory or independent organisation if you consider that they have an interest in the matter and, despite the best efforts of the School, you believe that disclosure within the School has been unsuccessful. Disclosures made to your legal adviser in the course of obtaining legal advice will be protected. 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. When making a disclosure, try and pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why. Ideally you should put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can. You are not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but you will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for concern.

4. There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

While the School hopes that such disclosures will never be necessary, it also recognises that it may find itself in circumstances that are new to it. It is recognised that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from your line manager, HR Department and/or your professional or trade union.

“Absolutely without fail – challenge poor practice or performance. If you ignore or collude with poor practice it makes it harder to sound the alarm when things go wrong.” (“Sounding the Alarm” – Barnardos)

**NSPCC Whistleblowing advice line is 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk
Surrey Children’s Services emergency duty team line is 03004709100 (01483 517898 out of hours)**

This policy works in conjunction with the Staff Code of Conduct, the Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy, the Grievance procedures and Disciplinary procedure, Working Together 2023, Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024 and Making Barring referrals to the DBS.

Please note that the Data Protection Act 2018 does not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purpose of keeping children safe.