



TRINITY COLLEGE WHISTLEBLOWING & CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY 2019-2020

Date of issue: August 2019

Date reviewed: September 2019

Frequency of review: Annually

Date of next review: September 2020

Trinity College has a responsibility to educate and look after vulnerable pupils. Crucial to our success is the dedication, professionalism and skills of our staff.

Our work with pupils' places staff in positions of power. In order to retain the trust of those we are trying to help, it is essential we take all reasonable steps to ensure this power is exercised responsibly.

We ensure our systems for recruitment and management reflect this responsibility. We also ensure that a climate exists in which concerns are taken seriously and dealt with thoroughly and fairly.

NOTE: All staff members have a duty to raise concerns about inappropriate practice or mistreatment of Pupils. Not to do so may result in disciplinary action.

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1. Purpose of this Procedure

Confidential Reporting is also referred to as 'Whistleblowing'.

Staff have the right and the responsibility to raise genuinely held concerns about abuses of power and trust by colleagues:

- Any concerns that a colleague might or has been mistreating or abusing a child must always be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately.
- This procedure is designed to ensure that other (non-abusive) genuinely held concerns are raised and are effectively addressed.

The procedure will apply to people involved in working with us though not employed by the Company (e.g. consultants, pupils on placement, agency staff etc.).

Any concerns about the actions or behaviour of such staff should be reported in accordance with using the procedure and the Senior staff member receiving the concern should pursue the matter with the employer or placing college of the person about whom concerns have been raised.

Any concerns that a colleague might or has been mistreating or abusing a child must always be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately.

No one exercising their responsibilities under this procedure and in good faith will be penalised for doing so. Any attempt to victimise employees for raising genuine concerns or to prevent such concerns being raised will be regarded as a disciplinary matter. The Confidential Reporting Procedure does not: -

- require employees to prove that their suspicions are well founded; nevertheless, they should have reasonable grounds for their suspicions.
- replace the Disciplinary Procedure, although the Policy may lead on to disciplinary proceedings.

The procedure does require management to act quickly and appropriately where there are concerns about:

- a. pupils using our services.
- b. any other pupils.
- c. adult service users.
- d. other employees

2. Personal Awareness

In working with vulnerable pupils, staff need to recognise as far as possible the impact that their behaviour, speech and presentation will have on pupils.

Those working with pupils should also be aware that games involving physical contact could be misinterpreted by pupils or can frequently be used by abusers as part of the 'grooming' process of a child. Therefore, any contact should be used only where relevant to the needs of the child. Staff should recognise that pupils need to deal with the pain of their experiences through acknowledgement and expression of their feelings.

3. Using the Procedure

How do I raise concerns?

You should raise concerns with your DSL, Ryan Smith and Deputy DSL, Tracy Jenkins as soon as possible. If the concern relates to the DSL or Deputy DSL, please contact the MD of Education, Louise De-Hayes.

What happens when I raise a concern?

This will depend largely on the concern you raise. However, in all cases the DSL or Deputy DSL will arrange to meet you as soon as possible. We will ask you how you would like the concern to be resolved and whether you would want to be told about how we will conduct the investigation. The manager will tell you either at the meeting or as soon as possible what action will be taken. You will be told the outcome of any investigation into your concerns. Sometimes, however, it may not be possible to reveal the full extent of the investigation where this relates to personal issues involving a third party. Where action is not taken, you will be provided with an explanation.

3.4 Can I bring someone to support me when I meet the Manager to discuss my concerns?

Yes, but because issues raised under this procedure will often be of a sensitive nature, you should discuss the matter with as few people as possible.

3.5 How long will it take for my concerns to be addressed?

This will depend on the nature of the issues you raise. Wherever possible, the matter will be addressed as quick as possible.

3.6 What can I do if I am unhappy with the actions taken in response to the concerns I have raised?

If you do not agree with the way your concerns have been dealt with by Management, you may in the first instance notify the DSL. Alternatively, you may seek advice from Public Concern at Work, a charity which provides free independent legal advice to staff and others who wish to raise concerns about the workplace.

4. Managing the Procedure

4.1 What do I do as a Manager if concerns are raised with me?

- a. You must arrange to meet the person raising the concerns as quickly as possible to establish exactly what the concern is and understand what has given rise to it.
- b. You need to consider carefully where the meeting should take place and allow the person raising the concerns to be accompanied by an appropriate friend or colleague, if that is their wish.
- c. You must make a note of your conversations with the person raising the concerns and agree the accuracy of that note with them.
- d. You must be sensitive to the fact that the person concerned may feel uncomfortable about raising issues with you regarding a colleague or a manager.
- e. You must consider and address the support needs of the person who is the subject of the concerns and of the person raising them.
- f. If a person disclosing a concern wishes their identity to be confidential, you ought to provide reassurance that their wish will be respected. You should explain that you will not disclose their identity without their consent unless a Court Order requires this. You should also explain that it may not always be possible to take all the necessary action if their identity is to remain confidential.
- g. You must prioritise the process of dealing with the issue remembering that, wherever possible, it should be addressed as quickly as possible.

4.2 What do I do once I have raised the concern?

If the issue appears to be of a relatively minor and straightforward nature, you may decide to resolve it informally and directly with the individual who is the cause of the concerns. If the issue appears to be complex or more serious, you must first consider whether any immediate action is necessary to protect the needs of the child. (This may include referring the matter to the Police and/or initiating Referring Safeguarding Concerns Procedure. If the concern relates to the welfare of a child and you do not feel able to respond, you should seek advice on how to proceed from the DSL. You must then decide how the issue is to be investigated (e.g. under Disciplinary Procedures) and must arrange for that investigation to take place as quickly as possible. You must inform the person raising the concerns of the action that you have taken and of the outcome of any investigation.

4.3 What do I do if I have no line management responsibility for the individual who is the cause of the concerns?

You must refer the matter to an appropriate manager with responsibility for the individual who is the cause of the concerns. However, in considering who to refer the matter to, you should take account of the level of seriousness of the concerns and any reservations expressed by the person raising them about who they should be referred to. If you are left with any uncertainties, you should talk to the DSL or Head Teacher (Confidential Reporting).

4.4 Who notifies the person raising the concern of the outcome of any investigation if I refer the matter to the Line Manager of the individual who is the subject of the concerns?

The DSL or Deputy DSL will be the first point of contact (Confidential Reporting) of the person who is the cause of the concerns. If confidentiality is an issue, then it will be necessary for you to advise the person raising the concern of the outcome of the investigation. If not, it may be most appropriate for the Manager initiating the investigation to do so. Either way, the employee raising the concerns should be told before the investigation begins, if possible, who will notify her/him of its outcome.

5. Recording

A record of concerns raised under this procedure together with a record of action taken in response will be

retained on the personal files of the complainant and the person complained about for as long as those files are retained. The record on the file of the person complained about will exclude the identity of the complainant in cases where anonymity has been maintained. 6. Confidentiality This Procedure has been designed to ensure that employees can feel confident that they can raise concerns about malpractice and that those concerns will be properly and effectively dealt with within the Company. It is preferable that a serious concern is raised responsibly rather than not at all. If you are uncertain about who to approach with your

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