

# St Charles Catholic Primary School



## Whistle Blowing Policy

**This policy is based on the Bi-Borough Model Policy**

*(Royal borough of Kensington and Chelsea/  
Hammersmith and Fulham).*

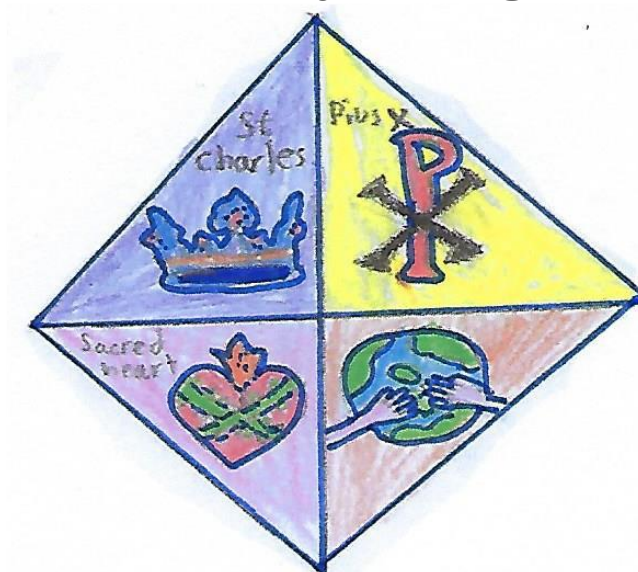
**Date policy adopted by the Governing Body: Spring 2023**

**Date policy to be reviewed: Spring 2025**

St Charles Catholic Primary school

# Our Mission Statement

✠ *Love God, Love your Neighbour* ✠



*(Design by Claudia 5A - 2020)*

*Through God's love, and with guidance from the Holy Spirit, we, the Community of St Charles, share our Catholic faith together. We seek to nurture in our children an understanding of the importance of Christian values and a deep love and lifelong commitment to God.*

*We value the unique strengths and gifts of the children entrusted to us and strive to provide an excellent education, so that through our teaching the children may realise their full potential.*

*In partnership with our families, Governors and Parish, and inspired by our faith, we support the children of St Charles. We encourage them to shine, to have pride in their achievements, to show concern for others and contribute to society as responsible citizens.*

## **Our Aims**

- *To appreciate that we are all uniquely created and loved by God.*
  - *To deepen each child's understanding of the Catholic faith.*
- *To nurture in the children an understanding of Christian values and how these help shape our lives and the lives of others.*
  - *To understand the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation.*
- *To work in partnership with parents and Parish to create a Christian atmosphere enriched through prayer.*
- *To provide an excellent education so children learn and achieve their potential.*
- *To respect and care for one another in a happy, welcoming and nurturing community.*
- *To ensure children care and respect others, develop an understanding of the world and contribute to society as responsible citizens.*

## **Introduction**

Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within the organisation. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the school. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances, it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice.

St Charles Catholic Primary school is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment we expect employees, and others that we deal with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of St Charles Catholic Primary school's work to come forward and voice those concerns. It is recognised that most cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis.

This policy document makes it clear that you can do so without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. This whistleblowing policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within St Charles Catholic Primary school rather than overlooking a problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside.

The policy applies to all employees and those contractors working for St Charles Catholic Primary school on St Charles Catholic Primary school's premises, for example, agency staff. It also covers suppliers and those providing services under a contract with St Charles Catholic Primary school in their own premises.

These procedures are in addition to St Charles Catholic Primary school's complaints procedures and other statutory reporting procedures applying to directorates.

# **1 AIMS AND SCOPE OF THIS POLICY**

1.2 This policy aims to:

- encourage you to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice
- provide avenues for you to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken
- ensure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue them if you are not satisfied
- reassure you that you will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if you have a reasonable belief that you have made any disclosure in good faith.

1.2 There are existing procedures in place to enable you to lodge a grievance relating to your own employment. The whistleblowing policy is intended to cover major concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures. These include:

- conduct which is an offence or a breach of law
- disclosures related to miscarriages of justice
- health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees
- damage to the environment
- the unauthorised use of public funds
- possible fraud and corruption
- sexual or physical abuse of clients, or
- other unethical conduct

1.3 Thus, any serious concerns that you have about any aspect of service provision or the conduct of employees, volunteers, consultants, or Senior

Leaders of St Charles Catholic Primary school or others acting on behalf of St Charles Catholic Primary school can be reported under the whistleblowing policy. This may be about something that:

- makes you feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards, your experience or the standards you believe St Charles Catholic Primary school subscribes to; or
- is against the St Charles Catholic School's policies and/or procedures; or
- falls below established standards of practice; or
- amounts to improper conduct.

1.4 This policy does not replace St Charles Catholic Primary school's complaints procedure or any other related policy.

## **2 SAFEGUARDS**

### **Bullying, Harassment or Victimisation**

2.1 St Charles Catholic Primary school is committed to good practice and high standards and wants to be supportive of employees.

2.2 St Charles Catholic Primary school recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. If what you are saying is true, you should have nothing to fear because you will be doing your duty to your employer and those for whom you are providing a service.

2.3 St Charles Catholic Primary school will not tolerate any bullying, harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

2.4 Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice will not influence or be influenced by any disciplinary or redundancy procedures that already affect you.

### **3 CONFIDENTIALITY**

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness.

### **4 ANONYMOUS ALLEGATIONS**

4.1 This policy encourages you to put your name to your allegation whenever possible.

4.2 Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful but will be considered at the discretion of St Charles Catholic Primary school.

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

- the seriousness of the issues raised
- the credibility of the concern; and
- the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

### **5 UNTRUE ALLEGATIONS**

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

### **6 HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN (OR MAKE A COMPLAINT)**

6.1 As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with the Executive Head or the Head of School. This depends, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is thought to be involved in the malpractice. If you feel the leadership team are in some way involved or are condoning the activity you should approach the School's Chair of Governors,

Simon Enright/Maria Costigan. Alternatively, you can contact the Local Authority using one of the contacts below if you feel it is more appropriate to do so.

- Bi-borough Strategic Lead of Human Resources,  
Debbie Morris, 0207 361 2136
- Bi-borough Director of Internal Audit, Fraud, Risk Management and Insurance,  
David Huges, 020 7361 2389

6.2 All matters relating to items covered under the grievance procedures should be referred to Human Resources.

6.2 If the matter is definitely related to fraud or corruption against the School you should always immediately contact the Bi-borough Director of Audit. Any approach will be treated with the strictest confidence.

6.3 The earlier you express the concern, the easier it is to take action. Although you are not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, you will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are sufficient grounds for your concern.

6.4 Once you have told us of your concern, we will look into it to assess initially what action should be taken. This may involve an internal inquiry or a more formal investigation. We will tell you who is handling the matter, how you can contact him/her and whether your further assistance may be needed. All matters relating to fraud will be investigated by the Bi-borough Director of Audit or the Bi-borough Head of Fraud.

6.5 Within ten working days of a concern being raised, the person handling the matter will write to you:

- acknowledging that the concern has been received
- indicating how we propose to deal with the matter
- giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response
- telling you whether any initial enquiries have been made
- supplying you with information on staff support mechanisms, and
- telling you whether further investigations will take place and if not, why not.

6.6 If your concern is that a member of the Senior Leadership Team is involved in the wrongdoing, has failed to make a proper investigation or has failed to report the outcome of the investigation then the Bi-borough Director of Internal Audit, Fraud, Risk Management and Insurance can review the investigation carried out, make any necessary enquiries and make their own report to Senior Management.

## **7 Independent Advice**

Although we would hope this policy gives you the reassurance to report any concerns you may have through the internal channels we recognise that there may be circumstances where you feel unable to follow this process and want external advice and support. This support is available from;

- [Protect-advice.org.uk](http://Protect-advice.org.uk). This is an independent charity which exists specifically to offer legal advice and assistance to employees with concerns.
- Trade Unions: employees may wish to be represented by or seek the advice of their staff representative when using the provisions of this policy. The majority of Trade Unions have issued their own guidance on reporting concerns and both Councils endorse the trade union officers' role in this area. The principal staff side contacts are:



➤ Unison: 0800 0 857 857

➤ GMB: 020 8202 8272

## **8 Summary**

### **DO**

- Make a difference and report your concerns.
- Write down all the details of your concern.
- Deal with the matter quickly. Any delay could allow the problem to continue and escalate and for evidence to disappear.

### **DON'T**

- Let it go unreported.
- Be afraid to raise concerns but use this policy's protection.
- Take matters into your own hands or alert individuals to your concerns. under those procedures.

Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation. If urgent action is required, this will be taken before any investigation is conducted.