

St Elizabeth Catholic Primary School

Whistleblowing



The Governing Body of St Elizabeth Catholic Primary School

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| Date of Policy | September 2021 |
| Review Date | September 2023 |
| Chair/Committee Chair of Governor's signature | |
| Headteacher's signature | |

Mission Statement

'Striving for excellence in a caring Catholic community.'

Safeguarding Statement

At St Elizabeth Catholic Primary School, we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at St Elizabeth Catholic Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

Equality statement

As a school we are committed to ensuring that equality principles are embedded within all school policies and procedures, as we endeavour to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- Promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities, sexual orientation, and ethnic origins.

School Values

As a Catholic school with a strong Christian ethos we actively support and promote a value-based education. By living out our 4Rs – Relationships, Resilience, Responsibility and Respect, we encourage the whole school community to:

- Think about and reflect upon positive Christian, British and Universal values
- Experience how living out these values impacts on themselves and others, in school, in the wider community and in the world
- Instil a sense of belonging to the school, the local community, the country they live in and the wider global community
- Inspire individuals to choose their own positive personal social, moral and spiritual values
- Promote an inclusive school ethos and a learning climate that will raise aspirations and achievement
- Raise self-esteem and encourage children to take more responsibility for their own behaviour and learning

British Values

At St Elizabeth's, the school recognises and promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Through this provision of SMSC, the school will:

- enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely;
- enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England; further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- encourage respect for other people;
- and encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

Data Protection

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) ensures a balance between an individual's rights to privacy and the lawful processing of personal data undertaken by organisations in the course of their business. It aims to protect the rights of individuals about whom data is obtained, stored, processed or supplied and requires that organisations take appropriate security measures against unauthorised access, alteration, disclosure or destruction of personal data.

The School will protect and maintain a balance between data protection rights in accordance with the GDPR. This policy sets out how we handle the personal data of our pupils, parents, suppliers, employees, workers and other third parties.

Changes to data protection legislation will be monitored and further amendments may be required to this policy in order to remain compliant with legal obligations.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with its content and comply with the provisions contained in it. Breach of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary offence which may result in disciplinary action under the School's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure up to and including summary dismissal depending on the seriousness of the breach.

1. Preamble

The school is a Catholic school, founded by and forming part of the Catholic Church. In addition to the Church's funds which established the school, it is sustained in its mission by receipt of public funds. Accordingly, it is accountable to the Catholic community of which it is a part and which provided the school and to the public whose funds it expends. The school is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment we expect employees and others with whom we deal, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the 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 makes it clear that you can do so without fear of victimisation, discrimination or disadvantage. This policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within the school in the first instance so that it is not necessary to resort to outside agencies.

2. Aims and Scope of this Policy

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

- conduct which is an offence, a breach of the law or contrary to Church teaching;
- 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 or Church funds;
- possible fraud and corruption;
- abuse of students; or
- other unethical or immoral conduct.

Thus, any serious concerns that you have about any aspect of service provision or the conduct of employees or governors of the school or others acting on behalf of the school can be reported under this policy. This may be something that makes you feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards, your experience or the values, beliefs and standards to which the school subscribes; is against the school's trust deed or instrument of government or policies; falls below established standards of practice; or amounts to improper conduct.

3. Safeguards

The school will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith. Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice will not influence you or be influenced by any disciplinary or redundancy procedures that might affect you.

4. 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. You also have a duty to observe this confidentiality.

5. Anonymous Allegations

You are encouraged to put your name to your allegation wherever possible. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful but will be considered at the discretion of the school. In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account will include:

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

6. 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.

7. How to Raise a Concern

If you reasonably believe that you have concerns about conduct or practice which is potentially illegal, corrupt, improper, unsafe or unethical or which amounts to serious malpractice within the school you should ideally raise these concerns with your line manager. However, if, for whatever

reason this is not possible or appropriate, you should contact the Headteacher. You will be given the opportunity to discuss your suspicions and an appropriate person will be designated as investigating officer, who will arrange for an investigation to take place.

If you suspect that the Headteacher may be involved in the malpractice, then you should contact the chair of the governing body. If you also suspect involvement by the chair, then you should contact the Diocesan Director of Education. Within ten working days of your initial meeting, the investigating officer will write to confirm the details of your concern and that an investigation will take place.

Throughout the investigation, you will be kept informed of progress and you will normally be advised of the eventual outcome, subject to third party rights. All correspondence will be addressed to your home. If a meeting is needed, it may be arranged off site if you wish, and a union representative or a friend may accompany you. Although records will need to be kept as the enquiries progress, these will be of an anonymous nature. There can be no prescribed time limits for completion of the investigative process, but it will obviously be in the interests of all concerned if the issue is resolved without delay. If you have any complaint about the way in which the investigation is being handled, then you should raise this with the designated investigating officer in the first instance. If the complaint remains unresolved then you may contact the Diocesan Director of Education with your concerns.

When the investigation is complete a report will be presented to the governing body, which will decide upon the appropriate course of action. Subject to any relevant legal constraints, you will be informed of the action to be taken. If you do not agree with the outcome then you will have seven days in which to make your concerns known to the governing body, via the chairman. If you remain dissatisfied with the response from the governing body, then you may consider contacting the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, who has the power to intervene if the governing body appears to be acting unreasonably. You should be aware, however, that this course of action could have serious implications for the school. At no stage should you contact the media without the written permission of the Chairman of the Governing Body. Such action would be a breach of confidentiality and could result in disciplinary proceedings against you.

8. List of Contacts

Executive Head Teacher – Angelina John, 020 8980 3964

Chair of the Governing Body – Tim O'Sullivan, via the school

Clerk to the Governing Body – Jane Ware, via Hackney Learning Trust

Executive Officer to the Speaker

Engagement, Culture & Organisational Development

Chief Executive's Directorate

Hackney Council

Hackney Town Hall

Tel: 020 8356 3591

LBTH – James Gilley 0207 364 3506

Melanie Benzie (Lado) 0207 364 0677

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