



Whistleblower Policy

The British International School of
Brussels

Ratified by BISB Board: June 2024

Next review due by: June 2026

Introduction

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing, dangers at work, or inappropriate behaviour. Employees in school will often be the first to notice if there is something seriously wrong within their workplace but may find it difficult to speak up due to feelings of disloyalty, or because of a fear of harassment or victimisation.

This policy sets out a whistleblowing procedure that is independent and confidential. The aim of the policy is to allow anyone who has a genuine concern to bring it to the attention of the Headteacher, Senior Managers, or the Chair of Governors, in the knowledge that the concerns will be taken seriously and investigated in an appropriate way, with no adverse repercussions for the person reporting the concern.

The highest standards of behaviour and integrity are expected of all members of staff, each of whom has an individual responsibility to voice concerns in good faith about practices that seem to be inappropriate.

Potential Reasons for Whistleblowing:

- To prevent an escalation of the situation causing concern
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To safeguard children
- In order for the whistleblower to avoid being complicit in the concern being raised
- To highlight an unlawful activity
- To highlight a serious breach of the school's policies, procedures and rules (for example, safeguarding responsibilities)
- To highlight conduct that falls substantially below established and expected standards of practice and behaviour within the school
- To highlight a miscarriage of justice
- To raise a concern that the school is not fulfilling its legal objectives
- To voice a concern that an employee is covering up wrongdoing

The above list is not exhaustive. Other concerns that should be reported include: known or strongly suspected fraud, corruption, bribery, theft or financial irregularities; the physical, mental or sexual abuse of staff; unfair discrimination; abuse of power; dangerous practices; criminal conduct; serious damage to the environment and school property; negligence; unprofessional

behaviour and evasion of statutory responsibilities; anything that may damage the good reputation of the school.

This procedure must not to be used by an individual who is generally dissatisfied at work or who has issues relating to personal grievances (e.g. bullying, harassment, discrimination). Anyone making allegations maliciously or for personal gain may be disciplined.

How to raise a concern:

In many cases it may be possible to address the concern either verbally or in writing through normal internal meetings or discussions. The concern can then be addressed and resolved quickly and effectively.

However, if the person raising the concern feels that this is not appropriate or possible, the concern should be addressed to one of the following senior managers:

The Headteacher, the Head of Pastoral Care, or the Chair of the Board of Governors.

- An initial meeting will be arranged during which the concern will be discussed. Notes will be taken to determine the key points to be investigated, and the name of the person raising the concern will be noted.
- It will be explained that confidentiality will be respected in so far as this is possible.
- A written summary of the meeting will be made by the senior manager concerned and will be submitted to the person raising the concern within 7 days for approval that the content is a true reflection of the initial meeting. (Should the person not wish to sign the document due to wishing to remain anonymous, the verbal agreement should be witnessed by another senior manager, and the document signed accordingly).
- An indication will be given of the way in which the concern will be addressed.
- Matters will be addressed internally in so far as this is possible. If there is substantial evidence to suggest criminal activity, external bodies such as the police would be contacted.