

## Introduction

At Reach British School, we are committed to conducting our operations with honesty, integrity, and transparency. We encourage all staff members, contractors, and others connected to the school to raise concerns about any aspect of our work, ensuring they can voice concerns without fear of reprisal. This Whistleblowing Policy aims to enable individuals to raise serious issues so they can be addressed swiftly and appropriately.

The policy covers concern that may involve:

- Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of students or staff
- Unlawful activities (e.g., theft, bribery, fraud)
- Non-compliance with legal regulations
- Risks to health and safety
- Environmental damage
- Breaches of the school's financial policies
- Miscarriage of justice
- Improper conduct or unethical behaviour
- Concealment of any wrongdoing

**Note:** Personal grievances are not covered under this policy and should be raised under the school's Grievance Procedure.

## Safeguards:

### Harassment, Bullying, or Victimisation

Reach British School recognizes that raising concerns may be challenging, especially if there is a fear of reprisal from those responsible for any malpractice. We will not tolerate harassment, bullying, or victimisation of anyone who raises a concern in good faith. However, whistleblowing will not halt existing disciplinary or redundancy procedures.

## Confidentiality

We will make every effort to protect the identity of individuals who raise concerns and wish to remain confidential. However, it is important to understand that during the investigation, the source of information may become apparent, and individuals may be required to provide statements.

## Anonymous Allegations

While we encourage whistle-blowers to put their names to allegations, anonymous reports will still be considered at the school's discretion. The seriousness of the issue, credibility, and the likelihood of verifying the claim will guide this decision.

# Whistleblowing Policy

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## Untrue Allegations

No action will be taken against an individual who makes an allegation in good faith, even if it is not confirmed by the investigation. However, if it is proven that an allegation was made with malicious intent, frivolously, or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against the whistle-blower.

## Procedure for Raising Concerns

### How to Raise Concerns

As a first step, concerns should be raised with your immediate line manager or the **School's Whistleblowing Officer (Regional HR Director)**. Where possible, concerns should be submitted in writing, detailing the background of the issue, including names, dates, locations, and any other relevant information. If writing is not feasible, concerns can be raised verbally by arranging a meeting with the Whistleblowing Officer.

The earlier concerns are raised, the easier it is to investigate and take action. While you are not expected to prove the truth of the allegation, you will need to provide sufficient grounds for the concern to justify an investigation.

### How We Will Respond

The action taken by Reach British School will depend on the nature of the concern raised. Concerns may:

- Be investigated internally
- Be referred to external authorities or law enforcement
- Be referred to external auditors

Preliminary inquiries will be made to determine whether an investigation is required and, if so, the appropriate form it should take. Some concerns may be resolved informally without the need for a full investigation.

Within **ten working days** of receiving a concern, the school will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the concern.
- Outline how it intends to address the matter.
- Provide an estimated timeline for the investigation or resolution.
- Inform the whistle-blower whether initial inquiries have been made.
- Indicate if further investigations will be conducted, and if not, explain why.

The level of contact between the whistle-blower and those handling the investigation will depend on the complexity of the issue and the clarity of the information provided. Additional information may be requested from the whistle-blower if needed.

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# Whistleblowing Policy

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## Conclusion

We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity at Reach British School. By empowering staff and other stakeholders to raise concerns, we aim to foster a culture of openness and accountability, ensuring any issues are addressed effectively and in a timely manner.

## Appendix A – Reach British School Whistleblowing Procedure

**Whistleblowing Officer:** Pooja Nair (HR Manager)

### Approval and Review.

Reviewed by: Head of Primary, Andrew Du Lieu / Date: 10.08.24

Confirmed by: Principal / Date: 10.08.24