



TRRS WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

The Roman Ridge School is committed to the highest possible standards and recognises that staff & pupils are often the first to realise that there may be something wrong within the school. Unfortunately, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or they may 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.

The school actively encourages staff with concerns about any aspect of the school's practice or any adult's or student's conduct to come forward and voice those concerns, in confidence, within the school rather than overlooking a problem.

Aim

The aim of this policy and associated procedures is to establish an internal procedure that will encourage and enable staff & pupils to raise concerns about any aspect of the school's practice, (which do not meet the criteria for being dealt with as a complaint, grievance or allegation), in confidence and without fear of reprisals, to ensure that the school continues to work within best practice and safeguard children and young people.

Scope

Concerns that should be raised via this Whistle Blowing Policy may be in relation to the actions or behaviours of staff or pupils, or about something that is perceived as:

- Unlawful
- Failing to comply with the school's policy and procedures
- Poor practice
- Improper conduct

Principles

This policy is based on the following fundamental principles:

- All staff & pupils have the right to raise concerns about perceived unacceptable practice or behaviour
- The responsibility for expressing concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour rests with all staff & pupils
- The school will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take action to protect staff when they raise a concern in good faith.

- The school will do its best to protect a whistle blower's identity when he/she raises a concern and does not want his/her name to be disclosed. However, if the concern raised needs to be addressed through another procedure, e.g. disciplinary procedure, the member of staff may be required to provide a signed statement as part of the evidence.
- In some circumstances the school may have to disclose the identity of a member of staff without his/her consent, although this will be discussed with the member of staff first.
- Appropriate advice and support will be made available to staff & pupils who raise concerns.
- Those who raise concerns will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation.
- The school will not tolerate malicious allegations, this may be considered as a disciplinary offence.

Procedures

Procedures for reporting and investigating 'whistle blowing' concerns have been developed to ensure that:

- Staff & pupils can raise concerns (no matter how small they may appear) internally and receive feedback on any action taken.
- Concerns are taken seriously and dealt with quickly and appropriately.
- Staff & pupils are reassured that they will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for whistle blowing in good faith.
- Staff & pupils can take the matter further if they are dissatisfied with the school response and seek external advice and guidance.
- Issues raised are addressed via other procedures and policies as appropriate, e.g. Child Protection & Safeguarding policy, allegations against a member of staff, grievance, disciplinary, health and safety, etc.
- Appropriate records are maintained for monitoring purposes.

Raising a Concern

Staff & pupils should raise concerns with Management, in writing, and include:

- Reference to the fact that it is a whistle blowing disclosure
- The background and history of the concerns
- Names, dates and places (where possible)

- The reasons why the individual is concerned about the situation

Staff who feel unable to put concerns in writing, can do so by phone (+233 302 780 456/7) or meet Management in person.

Who should you contact?

You should contact one of the following people in confidence:

Valerie Mainoo (Principal) – via school (valerie.mainoo@theromanridgeschool.com)

Gloria Dakwa (Head of Junior School) – via school (gloria.dakwa@theromanridgeschool.com)

Bruno Waze (Head of Middle School) – via school (bruno.waze@theromanridgeschool.com)

Josiane Chammas (Head of Senior School) via school (jchammas@theromanridgeschool.com)

Alberta Hassan (Designated Safeguarding Officer) via school (alberta.hassan@theromanridgeschool.com)

Rev. Dr. Joyce Aryee (Chair of Governors) – via school (governors@theromanridgeschool.com)

Investigation

The action taken will depend on the nature of the concern. All matters raised, with the exception of allegations of abuse against a staff member, or unlawful activity, will be investigated internally. The appropriate person/s will investigate the concerns thoroughly, ensuring that a written response can be provided within ten working days. The response should include details of how the matter was investigated, conclusions drawn from the investigation, and whom to contact should the staff member be unhappy with the response and wish to raise the matter.

If the investigation cannot be completed within the timescale above, the staff member should receive a response that indicates:

- Progress to date
- How the matter is being dealt with
- How long it will take to provide a final response.

In order to protect individuals, initial enquiries (usually involving a meeting with the individual raising the concern), will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take.

Concerns or allegations that raise issues that fall within the scope of other policies/procedures, will be addressed under those procedures. Some concerns may be resolved at this initial stage

simply, by agreed action or an explanation regarding the concern, without the need for further investigation.

If whistle blowing staff or pupil feel that their complaint has not been dealt with effectively by Management or if concerns remain, they are to refer concerns to the Board of Governors.

Allegations of abuse against staff

If an allegation is made against a staff member, the following action will be taken as per the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and TRRS Staff Handbook.

- The school will ensure the immediate safety of the children.
- Management will suspend the alleged perpetrator. Suspension is a neutral act to allow a thorough and fair investigation.
- Management will follow the procedures outlined in the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy to investigate the allegation
- If Management suspects that a child may be in danger or at risk of further harm or if a pupil discloses something that points to this, it is the responsibility of the Principal to report these concerns immediately to the Chair of the Academic Board of Governors, and as necessary to Ghana Police Service – Special Unit for Domestic Violence and Victim Support (DOVVSU) – Ring Road East, Cantonments, +233 302 773906 or +233 302 787373 Toll Free: 18555
hq.pro@police.gov.gh

The school will act upon the advice given to ensure that any investigation is not jeopardised.

- If it is agreed that there is not a child protection concern, the school will investigate further and feedback the outcome of the investigation