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| **ST ANDREW’S COLLEGE POLICY DOCUMENT** | |
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**1. Introduction**

1.1 Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously

wrong within a college. They may not, however, express their concerns because they feel

that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the college. 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.

1.2 St. Andrew’s College, Cambridge 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 the College's

work to come forward and voice those concerns. It is recognised that most cases will have

to proceed on a confidential basis.

1.3 This policy document makes it clear that you can do so without fear of victimisation,

subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. This policy is intended to encourage and

enable employees to raise serious concerns within St. Andrew’s Cambridge rather than

overlooking a problem or "blowing the whistle" outside.

1.4 The policy applies to all employees working for St. Andrew’s Cambridge or any

contractors on College premises, for example, builders and drivers. It also covers suppliers

and those providing services under a contract with the College in their own premises, for

example, working with taxi organisations.

1.5 These procedures are in addition to the College's complaints procedures and other

statutory reporting procedures.

**2. Aims and Scope of this Policy**

2.1 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.

2.2 There are existing procedures in place to enable you to lodge a grievance relating to

your own employment. This Confidential Reporting 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 and students

* damage to the environment
* the unauthorised use of college funds
* possible fraud and corruption
* sexual or physical abuse of students, or other unethical conduct.

**Please note:** Staff with concerns about the safety and welfare of a student should firstly consult the college Safeguarding policy. Staff who believe or suspect that a colleague has abused a student should also consult the college Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy.

2.3 Thus, any serious concerns that you have about any aspect of staff of St. Andrew’s

College Cambridge or others acting on behalf of the College 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. Andrew’s College Cambridge subscribes to; or
* falls below established standards of practice; or
* amounts to improper conduct.

2.4 This policy does not replace the Complaints Procedure.

**3. Safeguards**

3.1 St. Andrew’s Cambridge is committed to good practice and high standards and wants to

be supportive of employees.

3.2 St. Andrew’s Cambridge 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.

3.3 St. Andrew’s Cambridge 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.

3.4 Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice will not influence or be

influenced by any disciplinary procedures that already affect you.

**4. Confidentiality**

4.1 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.

**5. Anonymous Allegations**

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

5.2 Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful but will be considered at the

discretion of St. Andrew’s Cambridge*.*

5.3 In exercising this discretion the factors to be considered would include: ·

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

**6. Untrue Allegations**

6.1 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**

7.1 As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with your head of department or the

Principal. This depends, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved

and who is suspected of the malpractice. For example, if you believe that senior

management is involved, you should approach the Directors.

7.2 Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. Staff who wish to make a written report

are invited to use the following format:

* the background and history of the concern (giving relevant dates);
* the reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation.
* You should also, as far as possible, provide evidence to support your concern.

7.3 The earlier you express the concern the easier it is to act.

7.4 Although you are not expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of an allegation, you

will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are reasonable grounds for

your concern.

7.5 If you feel unable or do not wish to discuss your concerns with the College, you can

contact a charity called "Public Concern at Work" which can provide free confidential

advice on how an issue should be dealt with. Their telephone number is 0207 404 6609.

7.6 You may wish to consider discussing your concern with a colleague first and you may

find it easier to raise the matter if there are two (or more) of you who have had the same

experience or concerns.

7.7 You may invite your professional association representative or a friend to be present

during any meetings or interviews in connection with the concerns you have raised.

**8. How St. Andrew’s College Cambridge will respond**

8.1 St. Andrew’s College Cambridge will respond to your concerns. Do not forget that

testing out your concerns is not the same as either accepting or rejecting them.

8.2 Where appropriate, the matters raised may be investigated by a member of the senior

management or through the disciplinary process.

8.3 In order to protect individuals and those accused of misdeeds or possible malpractice,

initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so,

what form it should take. The overriding principle which St. Andrew’s College, Cambridge

will have in mind is the public interest. Concerns or allegations which fall within the scope

of specific procedures (for example, child safeguarding or discrimination issues) will

normally be referred for consideration under those procedures.

8.4 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.

8.5 Within five working days of a concern being raised, the member of the senior

management team 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.

8.6 The amount of contact between the member of the senior management team considering the issues and you will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved, and the clarity of the information provided.

If necessary, St. Andrew’s College, Cambridge will seek further information from you.

8.7 Where any meeting is arranged, off-site if you so wish, you can be accompanied by a professional association representative or a friend.

8.8 St. Andrew’s College Cambridge will take steps to minimise any difficulties which you may experience because of raising a concern. For instance, if you are required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings, St. Andrew’s College Cambridgewill arrange for you to receive advice about the procedure.

8.9 St. Andrew’s College Cambridge accepts that you need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. Thus, subject to legal constraints, we will inform you of the outcome of any investigation.

**9. The Responsible Officer**

9.1 The Principal and / or Directors have overall responsibility for the maintenance and

operation of this policy. The Principal and / or Directors will retain a record of concerns

raised and the outcomes (but in a form which does not endanger your confidentiality).

**10. How the matter can be taken further**

10.1 This policy is intended to provide you with an avenue within St. Andrew’s College

Cambridge to raise concerns. St. Andrew’s College Cambridge hopes you will be satisfied

with any action taken. If you are not, and if you feel it is right to take the matter outside the

College, the following are possible contact points:

* + - the designated independent organisation (Public Concern at Work for details see paragraph 7.5 above)
    - your local Citizens Advice Bureau
    - relevant professional bodies or regulatory organisations
    - a relevant voluntary organisation
    - the Police.

10.2 If you do take the matter outside St. Andrew’s College Cambridge, you should ensure that you do not disclose confidential information.

**Next review: August 2021.**