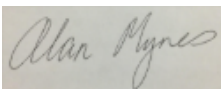




Whistle-Blower (Protected Disclosure) Policy

Approved by: Board of Management

Signed:  (Chairperson)

Date of Approval: 15th June 2026

Review Date: June 2029

1. Purpose

This policy is designed to encourage and enable staff and others connected with the school to raise concerns about potential wrongdoing in the school in a responsible and protected manner. It ensures that such concerns are treated seriously, investigated appropriately and that the person making the disclosure (the “discloser”) is protected from penalisation, in accordance with the Protected Disclosures Acts 2014, and the Protected Disclosure (Amendment) Act 2022.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees of the school (teaching and non-teaching staff).
- Contractors, consultants, volunteers and student teachers engaged by the school.
- Members of the Board of Management.

It covers disclosures of relevant wrongdoings that come to light in connection with the discloser’s work in the school.

3. What is a Protected Disclosure?

A protected disclosure is a disclosure of information which, in the reasonable belief of the discloser, tends to show one or more of the following relevant wrongdoings:

- Commission of an offence.
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation.
- Miscarriage of justice.
- Endangerment of the health or safety of any individual.
- Damage to the environment.
- Unlawful, corrupt or grossly negligent use of public funds.
- Mismanagement or maladministration by a public body.
- Knowingly concealing or destroying information about any of the above.

A matter is not a “relevant wrongdoing” if it concerns only interpersonal grievances or matters related to a worker’s own employment contract (e.g. pay or performance), unless it has a broader public interest dimension.

4. Principles

The school is committed to:

- Encouraging disclosures made in good faith.
- Protecting those who make disclosures from penalisation or unfair treatment.
- Investigating disclosures promptly, fairly and confidentially.
- Taking appropriate corrective action where wrongdoing is found.
- Complying fully with the Protected Disclosures Acts 2014–2022 and Department of Education guidance.

5. Making a Disclosure

5.1 Internal Reporting Channels

The Designated Officer for receiving protected disclosures in the school is:
Kathy Jones, Principal

In the case of a disclosure concerning the Principal, the disclosure should be made to the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

Disclosures may be made:

- In writing (preferred, marked "Confidential – Protected Disclosure"), or
- Orally, in a private meeting.

5.2 External Disclosures

If a discloser believes it is not appropriate to report internally, they may make a disclosure to an external prescribed person, such as:

- The Department of Education
- The Office of the Ombudsman
- Or another body prescribed under the Protected Disclosures Act (see www.gov.ie for current list).

6. Confidentiality

All reasonable steps will be taken to protect the identity of the discloser. However, confidentiality may not be guaranteed where:

- It is necessary for a proper investigation,
- Required by law, or
- Where the discloser consents to disclosure of their identity.

7. Protection Against Penalisation

A person who makes a protected disclosure in good faith and with reasonable belief is legally protected from penalisation. Penalisation includes any act or omission that causes detriment, such as:

- Suspension, demotion, dismissal or disciplinary action
- Harassment, intimidation or discrimination
- Unfair treatment, coercion or threats

Any employee who believes they have been penalised for making a protected disclosure should report it to the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

8. Investigation of Disclosures

The Designated Officer will acknowledge receipt of the disclosure and determine whether it falls within the scope of the Acts. A preliminary assessment will be carried out to decide if further investigation is warranted. Investigations will be conducted in a fair, impartial and timely manner, ensuring due process for all parties involved. Where wrongdoing is

confirmed, appropriate corrective or disciplinary action will be taken. The discloser will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of the process, insofar as is appropriate.

9. Record-Keeping

Records of protected disclosures, investigations and outcomes will be securely stored and retained in accordance with data protection legislation. Identifying information will only be kept where necessary and lawful.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management every three years or sooner if there is a change in legislation or Department of Education guidance.

11. Related Governance Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school governance and compliance documents:

- Anti-bullying in the Workplace Policy
- CCTV Policy
- Child Safeguarding Assessment and Statement
- Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Dignity in the Workplace Charter
- GDPR Policy
- Harassment / Sexual Harassment Policy
- Health and Safety Statement