



Vita et Pax
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Vita et Pax Preparatory School
Established 1936

Whistleblowing Policy

Policy Originator	Head Master
Approved by	Proprietorial Body
Date Approved	February 2025
Review Date	February 2026
Status	Non-Statutory (Best Practice)
DfE URN	102064
Charity No	281566

1. Purpose

This policy is designed to encourage staff and volunteers at Vita et Pax Preparatory School to raise concerns about malpractice, wrongdoing, risk or danger within the school without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage.

It is intended to cover concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures such as the staff grievance procedure, and relates to the wider public interest.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, governors, agency workers, contractors and any other person working on behalf of the school. It covers concerns about:

- A criminal offence being committed or likely to be committed.
- A failure to comply with a legal obligation.
- A miscarriage of justice.
- A danger to the health and safety of any individual.
- Damage to the environment.
- Deliberate concealment of information relating to any of the above.
- Safeguarding concerns about children or vulnerable adults.
- Financial irregularities, fraud, bribery or corruption.

3. Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013).
- The Employment Rights Act 1996.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025.
- Independent School Standards Regulations 2014.

4. Raising a Concern

Any member of staff who has a concern should, in the first instance, raise the matter with the Head Master. If the concern involves the Head Master, or if the member of staff feels unable to raise the matter with them, the concern should be raised with the Chair of the Proprietorial Body (Pushkar Acharya).

Concerns can be raised verbally or in writing. When raising a concern, the individual should provide:

- The background and history of the concern.
- Names, dates, places and any other relevant information.
- The reason why they are particularly concerned about the situation.

It is not necessary for the whistleblower to have proof of wrongdoing — a reasonable belief is sufficient.

5. Safeguarding Concerns

Where the concern relates to the safety or welfare of a child, it must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, in their absence, the Deputy DSL. Staff may also report directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Enfield or the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline on 0800 028 0285.

If the concern involves the Head Master, it should be reported directly to the Chair of the Proprietorial Body, the LADO, or the NSPCC.

6. How the School Will Respond

All concerns will be taken seriously and investigated appropriately. The school will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the concern within 5 working days.
- Assess the concern and determine the appropriate course of action.
- Conduct an investigation (internally or externally as appropriate).
- Inform the whistleblower of the outcome, subject to legal constraints.
- Maintain records of the concern and any action taken.

7. Protection for Whistleblowers

The school will not tolerate any harassment, victimisation or unfair treatment of anyone who raises a genuine concern. Any person who is subjected to a detriment as a result of raising a concern should report this to the Head Master or Chair of the Proprietorial Body.

Staff are protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 from being dismissed or suffering any detriment as a result of making a qualifying disclosure.

8. External Contacts

If a member of staff feels unable to raise the matter internally, or is dissatisfied with the action taken, they may consider contacting:

- NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline: 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk
- Ofsted: 0300 123 1231
- The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI): 020 7600 0100
- The Department for Education (DfE): 0370 000 2288
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Enfield
- The Police (in cases of criminal activity)

9. Record Keeping and Confidentiality

All concerns raised will be recorded and kept confidential. Records will be stored securely and retained in accordance with the school's data retention policy. The identity of the whistleblower will be protected as far as possible, though it may be necessary to disclose it in certain circumstances (e.g. if required by law or to conduct an investigation).

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Proprietorial Body and updated as necessary to reflect changes in legislation or best practice.