

Admission Whistle blowing Policy

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. In recent years St. John's C of E Primary School has been increasingly oversubscribed.
2. Unfortunately the number of applications from parents who say that they live within the vicinity of the school when they do not, has also increased. St John's School regard such applications as fraudulent. The school is committed to achieving high standards of integrity and accountability and expect the same standards from any prospective parent.
3. St John's School therefore wishes to promote an open environment that enables parents, staff and members of the community to raise issues in a constructive way and with confidence that they will be acted upon appropriately without fear of recrimination.
4. It is expected that such issues will be dealt with either through the normal admissions system or the schools management system.
5. The following policy provides for action when there is reasonable doubt about the validity of an address that a family is using when applying for a place at either school.
6. There is an expectation that parents applying for a place for their child at St John's School are using their actual home address. Any person reporting a fraudulent application should do so to the school without fear of recrimination.
7. This policy on 'Whistle blowing' seeks to reduce the number of fraudulent applications and to ensure that places are allocated to families that have been resident in Buckhurst Hill.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU BELIEVE THAT A FRAUDULENT APPLICATION HAS BEEN MADE TO ST JOHN'S SCHOOL.

1. If you believe a false application has been made, act quickly to report it as described below but do not mention it to the applicant or other persons as this could prejudice any investigation.
2. If the information seems to be minor then simply tell the school by telephone.
3. If the matter is more significant particularly if it involves a breach of the schools admissions policy or where previous information has been

apparently disregarded you should raise the matter with the School Office, then confirm your information in writing. All such information will be treated in confidence.

4. Where the complaint concerns the school office, or if you believe that the school office have failed to take appropriate action, you should bring it to the attention of the Headteacher, or the Chair of Governor's.

5. Similarly, if, you feel your concern cannot/has not appropriately or confidentially been handled through the line management route then you should raise it direct with the Chair of Governor's or in exceptional circumstances, the Admissions Department of Essex County Council.

WHAT SCHOOL STAFF SHOULD DO WHEN RECEIVING INFORMATION ABOUT POSSIBLE FRAUDULENT APPLICATIONS

1. Again it would be inappropriate to have hard or fast rules and judgement must be exercised. While it is essential for information to be tackled effectively and with the aim of righting wrongs this may well be best achieved in many cases by discussion with the 'offending' parents. In more serious cases you may well have to pass the matter to the Admissions Department of Essex County Council.
2. If possible any written allegation should be given a written acknowledgement that the matter will be looked into.
3. The school will not normally contact the informant to notify them of the outcome of its investigation.

PROTECTING WHISTLEBLOWERS

1. As a 'Whistleblower' you may, if you wish, keep your identity concealed.
2. If you believe you are experiencing harassment or victimisation in your own application as a consequence of 'Whistle blowing' you are strongly encouraged to bring this to the attention of the Headteacher.
3. Whether or not relationships suffer in this way it may well be 'Whistleblowers' will find the process of reporting wrong-doing and making statements etc stressful, particularly where there maybe feelings of divided loyalties. This is to be expected, however, 'Whistleblowers' should be mindful that they are upholding a fair and transparent procedure.

WHAT IF THE SCHOOL RECEIVES A COMPLAINT AGAINST ITSELF

1. If a complaint or allegation is at all significant or made in a formal way then the school should inform the Chair of Governors even if you believe or know the complaint to be groundless or unjustified. Where a complaint or 'grumble' clearly does not justify taking up the line in this way, making a brief note on a file or similar will often be appropriate and in the schools best interest.

SENSE OF PERSPECTIVE

1. Everyone has the opportunity to report their concerns. Nevertheless it is important that where deficiencies in service provision standards are involved rather than fraud, parents should satisfy themselves that the failing is serious and that the potential disadvantage to the school is significant. Any unnecessary over zealous reporting will be inappropriate and counter productive.

MALICIOUS ACCUSATIONS

1. Equally if on investigation it is considered that a person or persons has made a malicious allegation then the school reserves the right to act appropriately.

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Agreed by Governors 19.3.09

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Agreed: 19/3/09 by The Governors of St John's C of E School