

ISP Reporting Policy – Schools

Escola Internacional de Alphaville

1. Introduction

The International Schools Partnership and the Head/Principal are committed to providing a high-quality educational service to students and expect high standards from their staff and contractors. To maintain these high standards, a culture of openness and accountability is of vital importance. The objectives of this policy are threefold:

- To encourage staff to raise concerns about malpractice in the School without fear of retaliation;
- To reassure staff that concerns will be taken seriously;
- To provide information on how to raise concerns and explain how the Head and ISP may respond..

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all School staff, agency staff, contractors, and volunteers engaged by the School. There is a separate procedure for students and parents to raise concerns about issues related to the school.

3. What is a complaint?

In practical terms, complaint occurs when a concern is raised about danger or illegality that affects other people. As the person raising the concern, you will not necessarily be directly affected by the danger or illegality. Consequently, you will not necessarily have a personal interest in the outcome of any investigation into your concerns. This is different from a complaint or grievance. If you make a complaint or file a grievance, you are saying that you have personally been mistreated. Such mistreatment may involve a breach of your individual employment rights or bullying, and you have the right to seek redress for yourself.

4. Raising Concerns about Malpractice

Malpractice covers a wide range of concerns. The types of activity that should be disclosed include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of students or staff;
- Unauthorized use of school funds and/or financial mismanagement;
- Fraud and corruption;
- Failure to comply with legal obligations;
- Endangering the health and safety of an individual;

- Damage to the environment;
- A criminal offense;
- Non-compliance with rules relating to financial and contractual procedures;
- Showing undue favor to a contractor or job applicant;
- Miscarriages of justice;
- Deliberate concealment of information relating to any of the above;
- Concerns about professional practice or competence of staff, other personnel, or other workers.

Staff should raise their concerns with the Head/Principal. The earlier a concern is raised, the easier it is to take action. You, the whistleblower, are a witness to the events, not the investigator. You do not need to wait for compelling evidence of malpractice before raising concerns, but you should have reasonable grounds for your suspicion.

When reporting a concern, you should provide as much information and detail as possible. In particular, you should provide the full names of the people involved or who know what is happening, including the names of those involved, dates of events, and any relevant documentation. This will help the investigator quickly focus on the key issues.

Initial investigations will be carried out to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. You will be informed whether or not an investigation is taking place.

5. Advice and Support

The School recognizes that staff may wish to seek advice and support from their professional association or union, where applicable, before raising concerns, and the School will support you in doing so.

Whistleblowers who believe they have been victims of whistleblowing-related detriment should immediately submit a formal complaint to their employer, providing detailed information on how they believe they have been disadvantaged and the reasons they think these disadvantages may be linked to their disclosure.

It is the responsibility of your employer to ensure that you are not victimized for complaint.

6. Confidentiality

The School understands that you may be reluctant to provide information about the malpractice of a staff member or manager, or even at all. As such, the School recognizes that whistleblowers may wish to raise concerns confidentially. If you (the whistleblower) request that the matter be kept confidential, your identity will not be revealed without discussing the matter with you first.

7. Anonymous Allegations

It is recognized that the purpose of a whistleblowing policy is to allow people to make protected disclosures with protection against any retaliation or victimization for disclosures made honestly and in good faith. It can be very difficult for some people to come forward and make a disclosure, and the prospect of having to identify themselves may make whistleblowing even more daunting. You are encouraged to give your name when raising concerns. An anonymously expressed concern is much less powerful and often more difficult to investigate and may lack credibility. The decision whether to investigate an anonymous allegation will be taken by the Head/Principal and Regional Manager. In making this decision, they will consider the seriousness of the issues raised, the credibility of what is being said, and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from other sources.

8. Protection for the Whistleblower

All concerns raised under this procedure will be treated seriously, and a decision will be made on whether or not an investigation is appropriate. Depending on the nature of the matter, it may be referred to the external auditor or the police. The person to whom you reported your concern will be responsible for keeping you informed about the progress of the investigation and the actions taken, although you may not be informed of the outcome. In some cases, the investigation may result in criminal or disciplinary proceedings. If this happens, you may be asked to provide written statements or testify at a hearing. The Head/Principal will support you through this process and ensure that you are clear about what will happen.

9. Allegations not made in the Public Interest

The School will not tolerate abuse of this Policy. Concerns raised frivolously, maliciously, or knowingly false may result in disciplinary action or, in the case of agency staff, termination of the agency contract. In the case of contractors, the matter will be reported to the relevant Contract Manager so that a decision can be made about the appropriate action to be taken.

10. Review and Operation of this Policy

The ISP, in partnership with the School, has overall responsibility for the operation of this policy.