



Whistleblower Protection Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to establish a procedure to provide whistle-blowers with protection, allowing students, parents, staff, former staff, and others “Eligible Whistleblowers” to come forward confidentially and anonymously, to the extent possible under existing laws, and to ensure that they are not victimised or subjected to any form of detrimental action.

Whistleblower policies are essential to good risk management and corporate governance. They help uncover potential misconduct that may not otherwise be detected.

Purpose

Whistleblower policies:

- provide better protections for individuals who disclose wrongdoing (disclosers);
- improve the whistleblowing culture of entities and increase transparency in how entities handle disclosures of wrongdoing;
- encourage more disclosures of wrongdoing; and
- deter wrongdoing, promote better compliance with the law and promote a more ethical culture, by increasing awareness that there is a higher likelihood that wrongdoing will be reported

Matters this policy applies to

An Eligible Whistleblower involved with the School should report the following matters (“discloseable matters”) when observed by the reporting individual:

1. Dishonesty
2. Unethical conduct
3. Serious improper conduct
4. Unsafe work practices
5. Improper state of affairs
6. Child abuse (please refer to our Child Protection Program)
7. Illegal acts including theft, drug sale or use, violence or threatened violence and criminal damage against property
8. Breaches of relevant laws, regulations, by-laws
9. Any other conduct which may cause loss to the School or be otherwise detrimental to the School

This policy does not apply to internal employee grievances. These matters are managed under the Staff Grievance and Complaints Resolution Policy.

How to make a disclosure

An eligible whistleblower who wishes to make a report in connection with a discloseable matter should contact the Director of HR or the Chair of the School Risk Committee (“Whistleblower Protection Officers”) The Director of HR can be contacted on 8808 8832 or in writing sent to the Director of HR, Korowa Anglican Girls School, 10-16 Ranfurlie Crescent, Glen Iris, 3146. The Chair of the School Risk Committee can be contacted at council@korowa.vic.edu.au

The School is committed to ensuring the Whistleblower Protection Officers are appropriately qualified for this role and readily accessible. They will act in an impartial and unbiased manner at all times.

If the report relates to conduct of the Director of HR or the Chair of the School’s Risk Committee the report should be made to the Principal who will follow the procedures set out in this Policy.

Whilst the legislation makes provision for reports to be made to members of the School Board these should be referred to the Korowa Whistle-blower Protection Officers in the first instance.

All reports will be kept confidential and secure. All persons making a report are assured that in making a report they will not be personally disadvantaged by dismissal, demotion, any form of harassment, discrimination or current or future bias. They may also be entitled to compensation and remedies and will receive civil, criminal, and administrative liability protection The person making the report will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation.

The person making the report may elect to remain anonymous if they choose and still retain the protections under the Act.

Investigating a disclosure

All reports of a discloseable matter will be subject to thorough investigation by the Whistleblower Protection Officers.

Best practices will be followed by the Whistleblower Protection Officers who will be fair and independent of the person who made the report and the person who is the subject of the discloseable matter. Where there is any concern/belief that the Whistleblower Protection Officers may not be able to act with impartiality the matter will immediately be referred to an external investigator.

The investigation will include the following steps:

1. Full details of the allegations obtained
2. Person against whom allegations are made is informed
3. Involvement of external parties such as the police considered by Principal or Chair of School Council as appropriate
4. Allegations fully investigated
5. Principal or Chair of School Council decide on action to be taken

Where the Principal or the Chair of the School Council decides that the allegations are of a serious nature or there is any potential for bias (whether actual or perceived), external investigators will be engaged.

The identity or any information that could lead to the identity of a person who has made a report will not be released to any person who is not involved in the investigation/resolution of the matter.

The Eligible Whistleblower will be kept informed of the outcome of the investigation. Where the Eligible Whistleblower is not happy with the outcome, they may seek a review directly from the Principal or Chair of the School Council.

False Reporting Abuse of the whistleblower reporting process and the making of false reports will not be tolerated and will be treated as a serious breach of the School's Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary procedures

Monitoring and training

The School will monitor and review this policy regularly to assess its effectiveness in encouraging the reporting of discloseable matters, protection of persons making reports, and investigation of reports. Education and training about the procedures involved under this Whistleblower Protection Policy will be provided to those involved in managing or investigating disclosures. The School's community will also be educated and kept informed in relation to the Policy and the protections and procedures contained therein.

A copy of the Policy is available on the Schools internal policy system and also available on the School's website.

Policy Ownership

The School's board is ultimately responsible for the whistleblower policy, as part of the School's broader risk management and corporate governance framework