



Whistleblowing Policy - Parents

Introduction

British International School (BIS), Ghana is committed to the highest possible standards of honesty, openness, probity and accountability. It seeks to conduct its affairs in a responsible manner, to ensure that all its activities are open and effectively managed, and that integrity and principles of public interest disclosure are sustained.

In line with that commitment, we encourage parents of the school who have serious concerns about any aspect of the school's work to come forward and voice those concerns anonymously.

What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the term used when a parent passes on information concerning wrongdoing. In this guidance, we call that “making a disclosure” or “blowing the whistle”.

Purpose of the Whistleblowing Policy

Parents are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within the school. However, parents may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would result in their ward being victimised. Stakeholders of BIS Ghana need to realise that they not only have a right, but also a duty to report any improper actions or omissions.

British International School, Ghana, also recognises and appreciates that parents who raise concerns regarding malpractice or wrongdoing are an asset to the school, not a threat.

Aims of the Policy

- Encourage parents to feel confident in raising concerns and to question and act upon their concerns about the practice.
- Provide avenues to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken.

- Ensure that parents receive a response to their concerns and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied.

Who Is Covered By This Policy?

The policy applies to all BIS stakeholders who use the facility or premises, for example, parents, agency workers, contractors, and consultants. It also covers providers of works, services and supplies, including the school's external contractors and those providing services under a contract with the school on their own premises.

Scope of the Policy

There are existing procedures in place to enable parents to lodge a grievance relating to their children's wellbeing. The Whistleblowing Policy is intended to cover serious concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures, in accordance with the Whistle-Blowing Act, 2006 Act 720.

These Include:

- Conduct that is an offence or breach of the law
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation
- Disclosures related to miscarriages of justice
- Health and safety risks, including risks to children, parents and the general public as well employees/staff
- Damage to the environment
- Information relating to the above issues that have been or is likely to be deliberately concealed.

Examples of the above categories are likely to include:

- Possible fraud or corruption
- Sexual, physical or psychological abuse of children and service users
- Harassment and bullying of children, parents and staff

- Breaches of codes of conduct and school policies

Therefore, any serious concerns that a parent has about any aspect of service provision or the conduct of the Management, school employees, others acting on behalf of the school or service users, can be reported under the Whistle Blowing Policy where the parent has a reasonable belief in those concerns and they relate to one of the specific areas set out above.

The Parent:

- Discloses the information in good faith
- Believes the concern is true
- Does not act maliciously or make false allegations
- Does not seek any personal gain, and
- Provided the allegations relate to one of the categories covered by the scope of the policy and referred to above.

There are national guidelines to help you as a whistle-blower. You can find out more on the protection of whistle-blowers from the Ghana WhistleBlower Act 720 (2006).

How to Raise a Concern?

- Concerns may be raised in writing anonymously. Parents who wish to make a written report are asked to provide the background and history of the concern (including relevant dates) and the reason why they are particularly concerned about the situation.
- The earlier the concern is expressed, the easier it is to take action. In order to assist with investigation, Parents should provide as much detail and supporting evidence as possible.
- A Parent is not expected to prove that an allegation is true, only to have sufficient grounds for concern.

The school will investigate and respond to all concerns raised by parents or service users through any channels including

1. Suggestion Box which will be placed near the front office
2. Send email to biscustomerservices@gmail.com

This policy should be read in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, BIS policies, Capability and Disciplinary policies.

Benefits of Whistleblowing

- Promote safeguarding
- Combat fraud.
- Avoid reputational damage.
- Prevent issues from escalating.
- Minimize losses.
- Raise awareness.
- Create an open culture.

Conclusion

When problems/issues are not known and corrected early enough it can affect the school's reputation and if the company's good standing is lost it's extremely hard to gain good credibility back, because it's easier to lose credibility than to gain it back. We must all strive to uphold right and avoid wrong in any way possible.