



Derryooper National School Policies

Roll Number: 17547R

Patron: Most Rev. Michael Duignan, Bishop of Clonfert

Chairperson: Fr. Kieran O'Rourke P.P.

Phone: 0860483344

Principal: Padraig Lohan

Protected Disclosures in the Workplace Policy

1. Introduction

Derryooper National School is committed to fostering a culture of openness, accountability, and integrity. This policy is designed to provide a framework for employees to raise concerns about **wrongdoings, illegal practices, or unethical conduct** within the school. It ensures that staff can **report concerns in confidence** without fear of penalisation.

2. What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing refers to when an employee raises a concern about a **relevant wrongdoing** within the school. Relevant wrongdoings include, but are not limited to:

- Commission of an **offence** (past, present, or potential future occurrences).
- **Failure to comply with any legal obligation** (except those under an employment contract).
- **Health and safety risks** to any individual.
- **Misuse of public funds.**
- **Gross mismanagement** by a public body.
- **Damage to the environment.**
- **Destruction or concealment of evidence** relating to any of the above.

3. Commitment to Protecting Staff

Derryooper National School is committed to:

- Encouraging staff to report concerns **without fear of penalisation.**
- Ensuring **confidentiality** where possible.
- Addressing concerns **promptly and fairly.**
- Protecting whistleblowers from **dismissal, discrimination, or unfair treatment.**

4. Who Does This Policy Apply To?

This policy applies to **all employees of Derryooper National School**, including teaching and non-teaching staff. If the concern relates to an employee's **own employment terms**, it should be raised through the appropriate **Grievance Procedure** rather than under this policy.

5. What Concerns Should Be Raised?

Concerns that should be raised under this policy include:

- Potential or actual **criminal offences**.
- **Financial fraud** or mismanagement.
- **Health and safety violations**.
- **Breach of legal obligations**.
- **Unethical behaviour affecting students or staff**.

Concerns related to **personal employment grievances** should be processed through the school's **Grievance Procedure**.

6. Safeguards for Whistleblowers

- **Protection from penalisation:** Employees who report concerns **reasonably and in good faith** will be protected, even if the concern **proves to be unfounded**.
- **Confidentiality:** The identity of the whistleblower will be **kept confidential**, unless required by law or necessary for the investigation.
- **Disciplinary action for false claims:** Deliberately false or malicious reports may result in **disciplinary action**.

7. Reporting Procedures

Who Should You Report to?

- **First point of contact:** The **Principal** or **Deputy Principal**.
- **If the concern involves the Principal/Deputy Principal:** The report should be made to the **Chairperson of the Board of Management**.

How to Report a Concern

- Concerns should be reported **in writing**, detailing:
 - Nature of the wrongdoing.
 - Relevant dates and events.
 - Any evidence available.
 - Names of those involved (if known).
- **Anonymous reports** can be made but may limit the school's ability to investigate.

8. Investigation Process

Once a concern is reported:

1. The Principal/Chairperson will **acknowledge receipt** of the concern.
2. An **initial assessment** will be conducted to determine if an investigation is required.

3. If an investigation is needed, it will be conducted **fairly and confidentially**.
4. Where necessary, the concern may be referred to **external authorities (e.g. Gardaí, TUSLA, Department of Education)**.
5. The whistleblower will be **informed of the outcome**, where possible.

9. Raising Concerns Externally

In some cases, staff may feel the need to report concerns externally. This should be done **only if**:

- The matter has been reported internally but no appropriate action was taken.
- There is an **immediate or serious risk to public safety**.
- The concern involves a **public body's gross mismanagement**.

External disclosures should be made to **designated authorities**, such as:

- Department of Education
- Health and Safety Authority (HSA)
- TUSLA (if child welfare is involved)
- Gardaí (if a criminal offence has been committed)

10. Communication and Review

- This policy will be **communicated to all staff**.
- It will be **reviewed every three years**, or sooner if necessary.

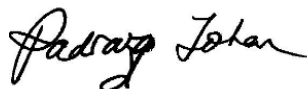
11. Policy Approval

This **Protected Disclosures in the Workplace Policy** has been prepared by the **Principal** and approved by the **Board of Management**.

Signed:

Chairperson, Board of Management: _____

Principal, Derryoover National School:



Date:

19 February 2025
