

"He does not utter a [single] word, except that there is, with him, [an angel] ready and waiting [to record it]." Qur'an, [50:18]

"Whoever sees a *munkar* (evil wrong doing/objectionable) should change it with his hand. If he cannot, then with his tongue. If he cannot do it this way, then with his heart. And this last method is the lowest point of Imaan." (*Muslim*)

Imam Nawawi writes: "It is obligatory for every sane adult to guard his tongue against talking, except when it contains a clear benefit. If talking and remaining silent are of equal benefit, it is sunnah to abstain, for permissible talking might lead to something undesirable or forbidden, as in fact is very often the case, and nothing can come close to taking caution."

Cases in which *ghibah* is permissible:

1. Injustice. One who has suffered injustice is entitled to mention the one who has committed injustice to someone who is capable of restoring his rights to him, such as any person with legal or moral authority.
 2. Seeking help to change an evil, or to reform the wrongdoer. If the intention in telling the *ghibah* is not to change the wrong, then it is forbidden to relate it.
 3. Asking for a fatwa. A person may say, 'My father/brother/wife has done such-and-such to me. What can I do about it?'
 4. Warning, such as warning a prospective buyer that the merchant is a swindler, warning a student that his/her prospective teacher is unscrupulous, revealing the faults of weak narrators and forgers of hadith and giving someone a candid appraisal of a person whom he/she is thinking of marrying.
 5. If someone is commonly known by a nickname. Although, if there is some alternative way to refer to him, it is preferable.
 6. Someone who sins openly, and has no qualms about his sins being mentioned.
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1. Preamble

Our school is an Islamic School, founded by and forming part of the Azhar Academy Trust. In addition to the Trust's funds that established the school, it is sustained in its mission by receipt of public funds.

The school is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment, we expect employees and others with whom we deal, who have concerns about any aspect of the school's work, to come forward and voice those concerns. It is recognised that most cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis.

This policy makes it clear that anyone with reasonable cause can do so without fear of victimisation, discrimination or disadvantage. This policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise

serious concerns within the school in the first instance so that it is not necessary to resort to outside agencies.

2 Aims and Scope of this Policy

There are existing procedures in place to enable an employee to lodge a grievance relating to his/her own employment. This policy is intended to cover major concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures. These include:

- conduct which is an offence, a breach of the law or contrary to the teachings of Qur'an and Sunnah;
- disclosures related to miscarriages of justice;
- health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees;
- damage to the environment;
- the unauthorised use of funds;
- possible fraud and corruption;
- abuse of students; or
- other unethical or immoral conduct.

Thus, any serious concerns that one may have about any aspect of service-provision or the conduct of employees or governors of the school or others acting on behalf of the school can be reported under this policy. This may be something that makes one feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards, one's experience or the values, beliefs and standards to which the school subscribes; is against the school's trust deed or instrument of government or policies; falls below established standards of practice; or amounts to improper conduct.

3 Safeguards

The school will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice will not influence you or be influenced by any disciplinary or redundancy procedures that might affect you.

4 Confidentiality

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness. You also have a duty to observe this confidentiality.

5 Anonymous Allegations

You are encouraged to put your name to your allegation wherever possible. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful but will be considered at the discretion of the Board of Governors. In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account will include:

- the seriousness of the issue raised;
- the credibility of the concern and
- the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

6 Untrue Allegations

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously, or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

7 How to Raise a Concern

If you reasonably believe that you have discovered serious malpractice within the school, you should ideally raise these concerns with the headteacher. However, if, for whatever reason, this is not possible or appropriate, you should contact the Executive Head.

You will be given the opportunity to discuss your suspicions and an appropriate person will be designated as an investigating officer, who will arrange for an investigation to take place.

We want everyone to feel able to report any child protection / safeguarding concerns. However, for members of staff, parents or others who feel unable to raise these concerns internally, they can call the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Staff are also able to contact the Local Authority Designated Officer lado@walthamforest.gov.uk or 0208 496 3646

If you suspect that the headteacher may be involved in the malpractice, then you should contact the chair of the governing body. If you also suspect involvement by the chair, then you should contact the Director of Education.

Within ten working days of your initial meeting, the investigating officer will write to confirm the details of your concern and that an investigation will take place. Throughout the investigation, you will be kept informed of progress and you will normally be advised of the eventual outcome, subject to third party rights. All correspondence will be addressed to your home. If a meeting is needed, it may be arranged off-site if you wish, where a friend may accompany you. Although records will need to be kept as the enquiries progress, these will be of an anonymous nature.

There can be no prescribed time limits for completion of the investigative process, but it will obviously be in the interests of all concerned if the issue is resolved without delay.

If you have any complaint about the way in which the investigation is being handled, then you should raise this with the designated investigating officer in the first instance. If the complaint remains unresolved, then you may contact the Director of Education with your concerns.

When the investigation is complete, a report will be presented to the governing body, which will decide upon the appropriate course of action. Subject to any relevant legal constraints, you will be informed of the action to be taken. If you do not agree with the outcome then you will have seven days in which to make your concerns known to the governing body, via the chairman. If you remain dissatisfied with the response from the governing body, then you may consider contacting the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, who has the power to intervene if the governing body appears to be

acting unreasonably. You should be aware, however, that this course of action could have serious implications for the school.

At no stage should you contact the media without the written permission of the Chairman of the Governing Body. Such action would be a breach of confidentiality and will result in disciplinary proceedings against you.

8 List of Contacts

This should include names and email contact details:

<i>Headteacher AAPS</i>	Mrs S Ahmed	s.ahmed@azharacademy.org
<i>Executive Head</i>	Mrs Rookshana Adam	r.adam@azharacademy.org
<i>Director of Education</i>	Mr Yahya Nadat	yahya.nadat@azharacademy.org
<i>Chair Board of Trustees/Governors</i>	Mr Ismail Gangat	contact@azharacademy.org

Secretary of State
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT
020 7925 5000

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