



## Whistleblowing Procedure

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Approved By	Trust Board	Status	Statutory
Last Review	May 2025	Next Review	May 2027

### Details of Policy Updates

Date	Details
June 2022	'Public Concern at Work' has now become 'Protect' and has been updated throughout
July 2023	No Changes
June 2024	No Changes
June 2025	Section 3 updated to include CEO
	Section 4 included reference to LADO
	Section 7 included reference to Secretary of State and updated support and guidance links

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## **1. About this procedure**

The Board of Trustees is committed to conducting its business with honesty and integrity and it expects all the trust's staff to maintain high standards. Any suspected wrongdoing should be reported as soon as possible.

This procedure covers all the trust's

- Employees;
- Trustees;
- Governors;
- Consultants;
- Those on work experience or work-shadowing;
- Volunteers;
- Casual and/or agency workers.

This procedure

- Does not form part of any employee's contract of employment;
- May be amended at any time;
- Should not be used for complaints relating to an employee's personal circumstances, such as the way s/he has been treated at work. In those cases, you should use the Trust's grievance procedure;
- Will be reviewed regularly by the Board of Trustees.
- Should not be used to address low level concerns relating to an individual employed by the Trust, this is addressed in the Trust CP policy under 'Low Level Concerns'.

The Board of Trustees will regularly monitor the number of Whistleblowing disclosures.

## **2. What is whistleblowing**

Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing, or dangers, in relation to any of the school's activities. This may include:

- Criminal activity;
- Failure to comply with any legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements;
- Miscarriages of justice;
- Danger to health and safety;
- Damage to the environment;
- Bribery;
- Financial fraud or mismanagement;
- Breach of our internal policies and procedures including the Code of Conduct;
- Conduct likely to damage the Trust's reputation or financial wellbeing;

- Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information;
- Negligence;
- The deliberate concealment of any of the above matters.

Anyone who is unsure as to whether, or not, to use this procedure, or who wants impartial advice at any stage, should contact the independent charity Protect, or the NSPCC, which operate confidential helplines. Its advisers will give free, confidential advice. The contact details can be found at the end of this procedure.

### **3. How to raise a concern**

Please complete the form at Appendix 1 to this procedure and give it to the Headteacher or CEO (if the wrongdoing relates to the Headteacher) or the Chair of Trustees (if the wrongdoing relates to the CEO).

Alternatively, the information set out in appendix 1 can be summarised in an email and sent to the relevant person, the email must state that the 'whistleblowing policy is being applied'. If the person reporting wants to remain anonymous they should state this clearly in their email and their anonymity and the investigation can be discussed as per section 4 of this policy.

You will receive an initial response within 10 working days and be invited to a meeting with the Headteacher, CEO, Chair of Trustees, or a nominated representative (as appropriate) as soon as reasonably possible, to discuss your concern. You may bring a colleague or union representative to any meetings held under this procedure. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

### **4. Confidentiality**

The Trust Board hopes that all staff will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this procedure and discourages you from making an anonymous disclosure.

Completely anonymous disclosures are difficult to investigate, particularly if further information cannot be obtained from the whistle blower. It is also more difficult to establish the credibility of any allegations. If you want to raise your concern confidentially, the Trust will make every effort to keep your identity secret and only reveal it, where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern.

Where you choose to raise a concern anonymously, it will be treated in the same way as where a whistle blower's name is known.

Whistle blowers who are concerned about possible reprisals if their identity is revealed are able to contact Protect, the independent whistleblowing charity, which offers a

confidential helpline or the NSPCC whistleblowing hotline. Contact details are at the end of this procedure.

In certain circumstances external agencies may need to be informed of a disclosure (as previously stated, the source may remain anonymous, but this may hinder the investigation), such as local authority designated officers (LADO) for safeguarding concerns.

## **5. External Disclosures**

The aim of this procedure is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator. You are strongly encouraged to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external.

Protect (see further down page one for a link to Protect) operates a confidential helpline and contact details can be found at the end of this procedure.

NSPCC: The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8.00 am to 8.00 pm Monday to Friday) or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

## **6. Investigations and Outcome**

Once you have raised a concern, an initial assessment will be carried out to determine the scope of any investigation. You will be informed of the outcome of the assessment and may be required to attend additional meetings in order to provide further information.

You should treat any information about the investigation as confidential. Accordingly, the need for confidentiality may prevent you being given specific details of the investigation, or its outcome, or any disciplinary or other action taken as a result.

Where it is concluded that a whistle blower has made false allegations, maliciously, or with a view to personal gain, the whistle blower will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **7. Protection and Support for Whistle blowers**

The trustees and governors aim to encourage openness and will support whistle blowers who raise genuine concerns under this procedure, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

Whistle blowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a genuine concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should raise it formally using the school's Grievance Procedure.

If the matter is not remedied you should raise it formally using the trust's Grievance Procedure. Trust employees also have the right to report to the Secretary of State for Education.

Whistle blowers will be protected from threats and/or retaliation. Any staff who are involved in threats or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, and in some cases the whistle blower could have a right to sue individuals personally for compensation in an employment tribunal.

Support and guidance is available from:

[Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service \(Acas\)](#)

[Protect](#) (Whistleblowing Charity)

Helpline 020 3117 2520

Your Trade Union

NSPCC: The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff

who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child

protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285

(8.00 am to 8.00 pm Monday to Friday) or email

[help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

## Appendix 1

### Whistleblowing Disclosure Form

Name(s) of the person(s) that you wish to make a disclosure about		
First Name	Last Name	Position

What is the wrong-doing that you wish to disclose?
<p>Please give as much information as possible. Be specific and include: Dates time and places Names of the people involved The effect that you think that it may have had</p>



What evidence do you have to support your concern

Personal details of person raising concern.

Completion of these boxes is optional but your completion aids a full and thorough investigation.

You can choose to give your details but remain anonymous, in which case every effort will be made to keep your identity secret and only reveal it, where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern.

Full name and position in the trust	Email address	Telephone numbers

I wish to remain anonymous

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