



Whistleblowing Policy

Committee:	Board of Trustees
Approved on:	
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Associated documentation	
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This document sets out the Whistleblowing policy for the Trust.

Leading Learners Academy Trust

Whistle blowing Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 All schools within the Leading Learners Academy Trust share a common ethos.
- 1.2 This whistleblowing policy sets out a trust wide approach to tackling this issue.

2 What is whistle blowing?

- 2.1 Whistleblowing inside the work-place is a common term used to describe reporting by employees or ex-employees, of wrongdoing on the part of management, the board of Trustees, Local Governing Boards or by fellow employees.
- 2.2 Wrongdoing may include for example, fraud, corruption, malpractice, breach of health and safety law, any other illegal or unethical act or breaches of the Trust Code of Conduct.
- 2.3 Employees may, for this purpose include, for example, contractors, agency workers or others engaged professionally or as volunteers within the Trust.

3 Protecting the whistle blower

- 3.1 Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 a whistle blower is protected from detriment and unfair dismissal.
- 3.2 The Trust will support and not discriminate against concerned employees who apply the whistle blowing procedure.
- 3.3 The Trust recognises that the decision of an employer etc. to report a concern can be difficult to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal. If concerns are raised with genuine concern and intent, there will be nothing to fear because employees will be doing their duty to the Trust as the employer and to those for whom they are providing a service.

4 Reasons for using the Whistleblowing Policy

- 4.1 Whistle blowing procedures should be used where there is a major concern over any wrong-doing within the Trust relating to unlawful conduct, financial malpractice or dangers to the public or environment.
- 4.2 Examples could include:
 - 4.2.1 A criminal offence (e.g. fraud, corruption or theft) has been/is likely to be committed
 - 4.2.2 The health or safety of any individual has been/is likely to be endangered
 - 4.2.3 A miscarriage of justice has been/is likely to occur
 - 4.2.4 The environment has been/is likely to be damaged
 - 4.2.5 Public funds are being used in an unauthorised or inappropriate manner
 - 4.2.6 The Academy's Governance arrangements have or are not being observed or are being breached.
- 4.3 The above does not represent an exhaustive list of areas covered by this Policy.
- 4.4 Whistle blowing is not appropriate under the following circumstances:
 - 4.4.1 dealing with issues between an employee and the Trust which relate to the employees own employment or rights of employment conditions generally.

- 4.4.2 dealing with pupil complaints, which will be dealt with under separately published procedures
- 4.4.3 dealing with to specific cases of child safety or safeguarding which will be dealt with under those procedures.

5 How to raise concerns

- 5.1 In the first instance, employees should normally raise concerns with their immediate line manager. This depends, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues, in these cases the concern should be raised with the Head of the school concerned.
- 5.2 If the concern relates to the Head of the school, the concern should be raised as matter with the CEO of the Trust.
- 5.3 Concerns should preferably be raised in writing and as soon as possible to prevent unnecessary delay in rectification. The concerns should outline the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible, the reason for the employee's particular concern and any specific detailed information that may assist in any following investigation or fact finding.

6 Dealing with a concern

- 6.1 Within ten working days of a concern being received, the Trust will write to the employee:
 - 6.1.1 Acknowledging the receipt of the concern;
 - 6.1.2 Indicating how the Trust proposes to deal with the matter;
 - 6.1.3 Providing a timescale for providing a final response;
 - 6.1.4 informing the employee regarding any initial enquiries that have been made, and
 - 6.1.5 informing the employee if further investigations will take place, and if not, why not.
- 6.2 Employees will also be provided with details of support available.
- 6.3 The Trust will consider the nature of the concern and the appropriate action necessary.
- 6.4 The concern may be dealt with in one of the following ways:
 - 6.4.1 investigated internally;
 - 6.4.2 referred to the police;
 - 6.4.3 referred to the school's local governing board;
 - 6.4.4 referred to the Trustees
 - 6.4.5 made the subject of an independent inquiry
- 6.5 In the initial stage, and to protect individuals and those accused of possible wrongdoing or malpractice, all initial enquiries will be made by an appropriate and relevant senior individual to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take.
- 6.6 If the concern or issue can be resolved by an agreed action without the need for a formal investigation, then this method will be used in the first instance. If urgent action is necessary, this will be taken before any investigation is conducted.
- 6.7 Those conducting the investigation will remain discreet and confidential throughout. The amount of contact between those considering the issues and the complainant will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided.
- 6.8 The Trust accepts that employees need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed and will ensure this happens.

- 6.9 The Trust will take steps to minimise any difficulties which employees may experience as a result of raising a concern.
- 6.10 Subject to legal constraints, those raising concerns will receive feedback about the outcomes of any investigations. This feedback will be given by the person conducting the investigation.

7 Appeal

- 7.1 This policy is intended to provide employees with a fair, robust and formal process for raising concerns within the Trust.
- 7.2 If the person raising the concern is unhappy with the outcome, then a formal appeal can be raised with the Board of Trustees.

8 Policy Review

- 8.1 This policy will be monitored as part of the Trust's internal review or as required by legislature changes.