



Whistle Blowing Policy

Non Statutory Policy

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Date presented to governors: 25 May 2016

Review Date: Autumn 2019

For internal use.

Link to other policies:

- Anti-fraud Policy
- Debt Management Policy
- Internal Financial Regulations and scheme of delegation
- Gifts and Hospitality
- Disciplinary Policy
- The Public Interest Disclosure Act
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



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1. Rationale

The Academy is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability.

In line with this commitment, the Academy encourages employees and others connected with the Academy (including temporary and agency staff and authorised volunteers working in the Academy) who have serious concerns about any action or behaviour which appears to contradict these standards to come forward and voice these concerns.

The Academy expects that minor concerns will be raised in regular meetings and discussions between staff. However, where it is felt that such action is not appropriate given the nature of the concerns, this policy sets out the steps to be taken in reporting and considering more serious matters.

2. Policy aims

This policy is intended to cover major concerns which fall outside the scope of other procedures, for example the Academy Complaints Procedure, the Staff Grievance Procedure and the Anti-Bullying Policy.

The following list provides some examples of such concerns, but is not exhaustive:

- Sexual or physical abuse of students where referral under the Child Protection procedures is not appropriate.
- Conduct or operation which is an offence or a breach of the law
- Health and safety risks, including risks to students, other staff and visitors to the Academy
- Inappropriate or unauthorised use of Academy funds or other resources
- Suspected fraud or corruption
- Damage to the environment
- Damage to the Academy premises or assets

3. Confidentiality

The Academy acknowledges that employees may be worried about the consequences to them if they “blow the whistle.” Therefore, concerns will be treated in confidence and the identity of the “whistle blower” will not be revealed.

However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed completely as there may be situations in which it is necessary for evidence to be given and for the “whistle blower” to submit a signed statement or to be present at the relevant hearing.

In any event, the Board of Governors will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation of an individual as a result of them reporting concerns under this policy. Any such action will be treated as a disciplinary offence and appropriate action taken under the Disciplinary Policy.

It should also be noted that if false or malicious allegations are made, consideration will be given to taking action against the person who made the complaint.

4. Reporting Procedures

Informal procedure

There are some situations which are of a minor concern and it is expected that these will be dealt with either by directly challenging the person concerned or by discussion with the line manager.

In such cases, the person making the disclosure should be satisfied that this approach is relevant and that the issue has been properly addressed. If a line manager has been involved, a note of the concern should be made and the action taken to address the situation.

If the person making the disclosure is not satisfied with the outcome of this process, the matter may be raised under the formal procedure.

Formal procedure

This procedure is intended to cover those matters not satisfactorily dealt with under the informal process and any matters which are considered sufficiently serious to merit making a formal complaint.

The formal procedure is initiated by the completion of a written report, which may include the following:

- The background and history of the concern (relevant dates, times and places should be included)
- The reason for the particular concern about the situation
- Details of any witnesses or other people who may share the concern
- If relevant, the action that the person making the disclosure would wish to be taken.

“Whistle-blowers” are encouraged to put their name to the report. Anonymous concerns will be considered in the context of the seriousness of the issue raised, the credibility of the concern and the likelihood of obtaining confirmation of the allegation from attributable sources.

The report should be noted “Strictly Confidential” and given to the Clerk to the Governors. The Clerk will send a written acknowledgement within ten working days with an indication of how the matter will be handled and an estimate of the time the investigation will take.

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will be identified to carry out an investigation (the “investigating officer”) and every effort will be made to conclude this in a reasonable time. However, the “whistle-blower” will be advised of any significant delay in the investigation.

It is likely that the “whistle-blower” will need to be interviewed by the investigating officer. The “whistle-blower” may be accompanied at any interview by a trade union representative, a colleague or “friend”.

The investigating officer will provide a written report to the Principal on the conduct of the investigation. A decision will then be made on the action to be taken.

The person making the disclosure will be informed of the outcome of the investigation, subject to any legal constraints. This information will not include details of any disciplinary action that may have been taken against any individual. Any information provided must remain confidential.

5. Other Action

It is hoped that allegations made under this policy will be handled internally. However, the Academy Trust recognises the lawful rights of employees to make disclosures to other bodies (e.g. the police, the Health and Safety Executive). In such cases, the “whistle blower” should ensure that they meet the criteria laid down in the [Public Interest Disclosure Act](#).