



WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

DATE CREATED/REVIEWED:	16 MARCH 2018, JANUARY 2019, MARCH 2020, JUNE 2021
MOST RECENT REVIEW	JULY 2022
AUTHOR:	Stephanie Morley, Clerk to the Kickstart Academy/TCAT MAT
DATE APPROVED:	12 JULY 2022
APPROVED BY:	KICKSTART BOARD
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	JUNE 2023

1. About this policy

- 1.1 We are committed to conducting our business with honesty and integrity and we expect all staff to maintain high standards. We encourage staff to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible.
- 1.2 This policy does not form any part of any employee's contract of employment and can be amended at any time.

2. Who is covered by the policy?

- 2.1 The policy applies to individuals working at all levels of the Academy, including senior managers, teachers, support staff, officers, governors, directors, consultants, contractors, trainees, part-time and fixed-term workers, casual and agency staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as 'staff' in this policy).

3. What is whistleblowing?

- 3.1 Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to the Academy's activities. This includes but is not limited to:

1. Bribery, fraud or corruption;
2. Conduct which has failed or is likely to fail, to comply with a legal or professional obligation;
3. Disclosure related to miscarriages of justice;
4. Actions which endanger the health or safety of any individual, including risks to children or the public as well as other workers;
5. Failure to follow the Academy's agreed safeguarding policies and procedures;
6. Damage to the environment;
7. Theft or misuse of Academy property or assets;
8. The unauthorised use of public funds;
9. Serious departure from professional standards
10. Knowingly covering up any of the above

- 3.2 This policy should not be used for complaints relating to personal circumstances.. In those cases, the Academy's Complaints Policy, Grievance Procedure or Anti-Harassment & Bullying Policy should be used as appropriate.

- 3.3 This policy should not be used for reporting safeguarding concerns. In those cases, the Academy's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and Allegations Against Staff Policy should be used as appropriate.

- 3.4 If unsure whether something is within the scope of this policy, advice can be sought from the Whistleblowing Officer (up-to-date contact details can be

found on the Kickstart website).

4. How to raise a concern

- 4.1 We hope that in many cases concerns can be raised with and addressed by the appropriate manager. However, where this is preferred not to be done for any reason or has been done already but action has not been taken, the Whistleblowing Officer or the Chair of the Kickstart Board (governing body) should be contacted. Up-to-date contact details can be found on the Kickstart website).
- 4.2 The concern will be acknowledged by the Whistleblowing Officer within two school days. An investigating officer will be appointed who has not been involved in the concern prior to this point. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the concern with the investigating officer. A colleague or union representative can also be present at any meetings under this policy – they must respect the confidentiality of the disclosure and any subsequent investigation. The investigating officer will also meet with named individuals within the concern and witnesses as part of their investigation. We aim for this to be carried out within 15 school days of receipt of the concern.
- 4.3 The investigating officer will produce a report of their findings. The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to the whistleblower via the Whistleblowing Officer within 10 school days of the meeting.
- 4.4 Every effort will be made to achieve the timescales outlined in Sections 4.2 and 4.3. If at any time this cannot be done, the whistleblower will be informed and provided with an updated timescale.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1 We hope individuals feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. Completely anonymous disclosures are difficult to investigate. Every effort will be made to keep the identity of those reporting their concerns secret and will only be revealed where absolutely necessary to those involved in investigating the concern.
- 5.2 Signing a non-disclosure agreement cannot stop an individual from whistleblowing or reporting a crime.

6. External disclosures

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

6.2 The law recognises in some circumstances it may be appropriate for concerns to be reported to an external body such as a regulator. We encourage staff to seek advice before reporting a concern externally – Protect operates an independent confidential helpline (up-to-date contact details can be found on the Kickstart website).

7. Protection and support for whistleblowers

7.1 We aim to encourage openness and will support staff who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

7.2 Staff must not suffer any detrimental treatment of raising a genuine concern in the public interest. Anyone believing they have suffered such treatment should inform the Whistleblowing Officer immediately. If the matter is not remedied, this should be raised formally using the Academy’s Grievance Procedure.

7.3 Staff must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. Anyone involved in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action.

7.4 If we conclude a whistleblower made a false allegation maliciously or with a view to personal gain, the whistleblower may be subject to disciplinary action.

7.5 Protect, a confidential helpline (contact details can be found below).

8. Contacts

Protect (Previously Public Concern at Work)	Helpline: 020 3117 2520 Send email via https://protect-advice.org.uk/buisness-support-contact-form/ Web: www.pcaw.co.uk
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NOTE – To ensure this policy remains up-to-date, the list of internal contact details relating to this policy is published alongside this policy within the policy section of the Kickstart website

(<https://hub.telfordcollege.ac.uk/governance/policies/>)