



**Education
Partnership
Trust**

Creating outstanding schools
which transform learning, lives
and communities

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Introduction

DOCUMENT CONTROL

This document has been approved for operation within:	BHS/ACS
Date effective from	2020
Date of next review	2023
Review period	3 year
Status	Mandatory
Owner	NM
Version	1

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 provides employees with legal protection if, under certain circumstances, they make disclosures about organisations for which they work. These employees are commonly referred to as 'whistleblowers'. The legislation is designed to protect employees from suffering any detriment or termination of engagement for whistle blowing.

Qualifying disclosures

Certain disclosures are prescribed by law as 'qualifying disclosures'. Disclosures are qualifying disclosures where it can be shown that Chapel St commits a 'relevant failure' by:

- committing a criminal offence
- failing to comply with a legal obligation
- a miscarriage of justice
- endangering the health and safety of an individual
- environmental damage
- concealing any information relating to the above.

These acts can be in the past, present or future, so a disclosure qualifies if it relates to something that has happened, is happening, or is likely to happen.

Procedure

Depending on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of wrongdoing, you should normally raise concerns with:

- Your line manager
- Your headteacher
- Your chair of governors or CEO

If, exceptionally, the concern is about the CEO your concern should be raised with the Chair of Trustees who will decide how the investigation will proceed.

You may raise your concern by telephone, in person or in writing. You will need to provide the following:

- The nature of your concern and why you believe it to be true
- The background and history of the concern (giving relevant details including dates)

Chapel St will respond to your concerns as quickly as possible. Initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. The investigation may need to be carried out under terms of strict confidentiality. There may be an internal audit, investigation through the disciplinary/grievance process, or the matter may be referred to a third party such as the police or an external auditor.

The person investigating will write to you within ten working days of a concern being raised to acknowledge the concern has been received, indicate how the Trust are responding to the concern and tell you whether further investigations will take place and the reason for the decision.

If you are not satisfied with the explanation or reason given to you and you have not yet raised the matter with them, you should raise the matter with the chair of governors or CEO.

If you are still not satisfied with their response, then you should raise the matter with your trade union, our auditors, the police or the appropriate regulating body e.g the health and safety executive. You should not disclose information which is confidential except to those included in this list.

Protection for the whistle-blower

The Act prevents you from suffering a detriment or having your contract terminated for 'whistleblowing' and the Trust takes very seriously any concerns which you may raise under this legislation.

You are encouraged to use this procedure if you are concerned about any wrongdoing at work. However, if the procedure has not been invoked in good faith e.g. for malicious reasons or in pursuit of a personal grudge, then this may result in disciplinary action, which could lead to dismissal.

NSPCC whistleblowing advice line

The NSPCC whistleblowing advice line offers free advice and support to professionals with concerns about how child protection issues are being handled in their own or another organisation. They can be contacted on 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk.