



SUCCESS ACADEMY TRUST

SAT Whistleblowing Policy

Approved/reviewed by	
Trust Board 22 April 2026 v3	
Date of next review	April 2029
Publication requirement	Statutory - website

This policy is reviewed every 3 years (or sooner if required) to ensure compliance with current regulations.

Version	Date	Updated by	Summary of changes
V2	2025	Trust Leader	
V3	April 2026	Trust HR Lead	Legislation updates

A worker is protected against detriment or dismissal in connection with “blowing the whistle” on illegal practices in the workplace (Employment Rights Act 1996 and Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998) PIDA amended in the ERA 1996 to introduce protection for workers who “blow the whistle” on wrongdoing at work. Workers have a right not to be dismissed or suffer any detriment at work as a result of making a “protected disclosure”.

This policy will be implemented in accordance with the Trust’s Scheme of Delegation and Articles of Association. The constitution of formal panels will be determined by the Trust’s Scheme of Delegation.

For the purposes of this policy Head Teachers/Principals will be referred to as Head Teacher and School/Academy will be referred to as school.

Data will be processed to be in line with the requirements and protections set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulations.

1. Aims

- 1.1 The aims of this procedure are to provide a framework which gives staff the structure required to raise concerns about perceived wrongdoing at work, and provides protection for workers who “blow the whistle” providing a right not to be dismissed or suffer any detriment at work as a result of making a “protected disclosure”.
- 1.2 This policy encourages and enables workers to promptly raise (“disclose”) any serious concerns (“wrongdoings”) they may have about the activities of employees, Governors/Trustees, students or volunteers, or external organisations in relation to their dealings with the school, without worrying about the repercussions of doing so.
- 1.3 This document sets out the procedure for those wishing to raise a whistleblowing concern and:
 - Outlines how individuals can raise their concerns in respect of any wrongdoings at work.
 - Outlines who an individual can escalate their concerns to, if, following the completion of any internal processes, their concerns remain, and
 - Outlines the protection from reprisals or victimisation afforded to individuals who blow the whistle where the matter raised is in the public interest.

2. Who is covered by this policy?

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees regardless of whether they are permanent, fixed term, casual, agency, students or volunteers, including Governors/Trustees. This also includes workers who provide services to the Trust in any capacity, including self-employed consultants or contractors who provide services on a personal basis and agency workers. This policy applies to all key stages in our Trust including EYFS.
- 2.2 This policy does not form part of employees’ terms and conditions of employment and therefore

may be subject to change at the discretion of the Trust/Governing Body.

3. What is Whistleblowing?

3.1 Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoings or dangers at work. Such disclosures are referred to as “Protected Disclosures”.

3.2 To qualify as a Protected Disclosure, an individual raising the concern must reasonably believe that one of the following specific categories is either already happening, has happened, or is likely to happen in the future **and** that the disclosure being made is in the public interest:

- A criminal offence, for example fraud
 - an act creating a risk to health and safety of others,
 - an act causing damage (or risk of damage) to the environment,
 - A miscarriage of justice,
 - Is potentially unlawful or a breach of, or failure to comply with any other legal obligation,
 - Safeguarding concerns.
 - Breaches of financial management procedures.
 - Sexual Harassment disclosure, whether the sexual harassment has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur,
-
- Is a deliberate attempt by an individual or group of people to conceal the any of the above.

A full list of disclosures qualifying for protection can be found in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

3.3 Concerns relating to a worker’s own contract of employment or concerns in relation to an allegation of bullying or harassment should be raised using the school’s grievance procedure in the first instance.

3.4 An individual who raises a whistleblowing concern has the right not to be subjected to any detrimental treatment (including being unfairly penalised, disciplined or dismissed) as a result of raising the concern.

3.5 Where an individual believes they have been subjected to detrimental treatment as a result of raising a whistleblowing concern, they should report the matter to the following person (contact details at the end of the policy):

- the Headteacher
 - the local chair of governors where the concerns being raised relate to the Head Teacher, or member of the Senior Leadership Team, or
 - The Chair of trustees if the concerns being raised relate to the local governors.
- Any such behavior will not be tolerated and may be treated as a disciplinary offence.

3.6 Where an individual has knowingly raised false concerns under this policy, this may also be treated as a disciplinary offence and will be considered under the school’s disciplinary procedure.

4. Confidentiality

- 4.1 The identity of those who raise concerns will be protected as far as practically possible. However, the investigation may out of necessity, reveal the source of the information and statements made by those who raised the issue may be used as part of any formal process, for example if a formal process/hearing is required, thus revealing the source of the concern.
- 4.2 Individuals' are encouraged to put their name to any allegations made, however, the school will consider concerns expressed anonymously. Any action taken in respect of anonymous concerns will be considered at the discretion of the school, considering:
- The seriousness of the issues raised,
 - The credibility of the concern,
 - The likelihood of the allegation being substantiated, and
 - Whether it is considered that the allegations are untrue/false.

Individuals who make a Protected Disclosure under this policy are protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 from any repercussions on their present position or future career. The Act does not protect anyone who is acting maliciously or making false allegations. The school does not tolerate any form of harassment or victimisation against an individual raising a concern.

5. Raising a Concern

5.1 Who can raise a concern?

Any individual who currently works for or who has previously worked for the school and who has a genuine concern relating to any wrongdoing (where it is considered to be in the public interest) may raise a complaint. In addition, a concern may also be raised under the policy by an individual who works for an organisation that provides a service to the school such as agency workers, volunteers and Governors/Trustees.

5.2 How to raise a concern:

Concerns can be raised verbally or in writing. It is important that the individual provides as much detail as possible, including:

- Details of the suspected wrongdoing, including times, dates and places etc.
- The specific names of individuals involved,
- What actions the individual is seeking by raising the concern.

5.3 Who to raise your complaint with:

Individuals should normally raise their concerns with their Line Manager in the first instance. However, this may not always be appropriate depending on the nature of the concern, the seriousness and sensitivity of the issue, and who is allegedly involved. Alternatively, individuals may contact: (contact details can be found at the end of the policy)

- the Head Teacher if the concern is regarding their line manager, or where the individual feels unable to approach their immediate line manager.
- a member of the Governing Body/Board of Trustees where the concerns being raised relate to the Head Teacher, or member of the Senior Leadership Team, or
- their Trade Union representative for advice and support on raising an issue.

Where an individual is concerned that the Governing Body is acting or proposing to act unreasonably or has failed to discharge its duties, they may in the first instance raise this with the school directly. Alternatively, they can contact the Director of Children and Family Services at Leicestershire County Council or the Secretary of State for Education via the DfE and/or Ofsted (Tel: 0300 123 3155 or via email: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk).

Where concerns are of a serious nature and criminal activity is suspected, individuals have the right to raise issues directly with the Police or other relevant agency as they see fit.

5.4 Support:

It is acknowledged that raising a concern can be difficult therefore where a worker raises a concern, consideration should be given on how best to support them. Advice on how to support individuals can be sought from the schools HR Adviser.

6. Action Following Receipt of a Whistleblowing Concern

- 6.1 Within 10 working days: the person with whom the concern is raised will write to the individual who submitted the complaint to:
- Acknowledge that the concern has been raised;
 - Indicate how it is proposed to deal with the matter;
 - Advise whether further investigations will take place and, if not, why not; and
 - Confirm, where possible, an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response.
- 6.2 The action taken will depend on the nature of the concern being raised. For example, the matter may:
- Be investigated internally,
 - Be investigated by a third party (such as HR),
 - Be referred to the School External Auditor,
 - Be referred to the Police, or
 - Form the subject of an independent inquiry.
- 6.3 To protect individuals and the school, initial enquiries may be made to determine whether an investigation is appropriate and what form it should take. Allegations which fall within the scope of specific procedures (e.g. child protection or unlawful discrimination issues) will be dealt with under relevant policies where appropriate.
- 6.4 The purpose of the investigation is to establish the facts and collate appropriate and relevant information in relation to the concern(s) being raised. Further enquiries may also be necessary in order to gather evidence relevant to the situation and to ensure the matter has been thoroughly considered. This may include the collation of documentary evidence and/or witness.
- 6.5 Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation.
- 6.6 The individual will have the right to be accompanied at any meetings by a Trade Union representative or work colleague.

7. Outcome of the Investigation

- 7.1 If an investigation is warranted, the individual will be informed of the outcome in writing and any next steps or action that will be taken. However, the individual will not be informed of the detail of the investigation or any action taken against another employee (e.g. disciplinary action) or where there are sensitive issues that need to remain confidential.
- 7.2 The individual who raised the concern has no right of appeal against the outcome of the investigation, however, if the individual is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation and wishes to take the matter outside the school, they may contact:

- For safeguarding issues only, Leicestershire County Council's Allegations Manager (LADO) (Tel: 0116 3054141),
- Their local Councillor (for those who live in the area of the school),
- Relevant professional bodies or regulatory organisations; (Department for Education, EFA, Ofsted, HM Revenue and Customs),
- The Police,
- The whistleblowing charity, Protect (Tel: 020 3117 2520),
- The National Audit Office (Tel: 020 7798 7999).
- Email addresses for Head teachers and Chair of Governors of our schools can be found on the schools' individual websites.
- Chair of trustee contact details can be found at Success Academy Trust [Success AT](#)

7.3 When taking the matter outside of the school, the individual must ensure that they do not disclose any confidential information about the school or its employees and pupils which is not relevant to the issue.

8. Responsible Officer

8.1 The Chair of Governors/Trustees has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy. The Chair of Governors/Trustees must maintain a record of concerns raised and their outcomes and will report, as necessary, to the Governing Body.