



## **Youth Engagement Schools Trust**

### **Whistleblowing Policy**

**Approved by: Board of Trustees**

**Reviewed by: Trust ELT**

**Latest Policy review: Summer 2023 – 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**Next Policy review date: Summer 2024**

# 1 WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

## What Is Whistleblowing?

- 1.1 A “whistleblower” is someone who discovers something that is wrong and alerts their employer or the relevant authorities to what is going on. The law protects whistleblowers from their employer subjecting them to detriment or dismissal by reason of their having “blown the whistle” and from detrimental treatment by their colleagues. To be protected by the law, the act of whistleblowing must fall within the legal rules and the whistleblower must reasonably believe that their disclosure of wrongdoing is made in the public interest.

## Our Policy

- 1.2 The trust is run in accordance with the law. No employee will suffer a detriment for speaking up if they believe that something is wrong.

The policy is updated annually in line with updates to statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

- 1.3 If you have information you believe shows any of the following:

- 1.3.1 A criminal offence was committed or is being or is likely to be committed
- 1.3.2 A person has or is or is likely to fail to comply with a legal obligation
- 1.3.3 A miscarriage of justice has occurred or is or is likely to occur
- 1.3.4 The health and safety of any individual has been or is being or is likely to be endangered
- 1.3.5 The environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged
- 1.3.6 That information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the above categories has been, is being, or is likely to be deliberately concealed.
- 1.3.7 A person has acted in a way that conflicts with the Trust's Code of Conduct staff behaviour and professional standards expectations (found in the Staff Handbook – available on the intranet)

Please raise your concerns immediately with the headteacher or any member of the Executive Leadership Team or the Board of Trustees.

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

- 1.5 However, you will still be protected in law if you disclose the information to the following:
- 1.5.1 A legal adviser in the course of getting legal advice
  - 1.5.2 A Minister of the Crown
  - 1.5.3 One of the prescribed persons set out in the Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 1999 (e.g. disclosure of a danger to health and safety to the Health and Safety Executive; disclosure of fraud to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry; disclosure of breach of tax rules to HM Revenue & Customs).
- 1.6 Disclosure to any other person is not generally protected except in very limited circumstances.
- 1.7 After you have raised a concern, the trust will decide how to respond in a responsible and appropriate manner. This will usually involve making internal enquiries but it may become necessary to carry out a full investigation which may be formal or informal depending on the nature of the concern raised. We will endeavour to complete investigations within a reasonable time and in line with other trust policies.
- 1.8 We will keep you informed of progress and let you know when the investigation is completed. We will not be able to inform you of any matters which would infringe any duty of confidentiality owed to others.
- 1.9 If you use this policy to raise a concern which you reasonably believe to be in the public interest, we assure you that you will not suffer any form of retribution or detrimental treatment.
- 1.10 Any employee who unreasonably criticises, bullies or victimises a fellow employee by reason of their whistleblowing will be liable to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal, depending on the seriousness of the conduct.
- 1.11 Named staff / trustee – The trust has appointed the following people as key contacts for Whistleblowing:
- Chair of YES Trust – Rob Halsall – r.halsall@theyestrust.org
  - CEO of YES Trust - Nic Brindle – n.brindle@theyestrust.org
  - Headteacher of The Axis Academy – Paul Eager – head@theaxisacademy.org
  - Headteacher of The Cornerstone Academy – Damien Sweeney - head@cornerstonap.org
  - Headteacher of The Fermain Academy – Emma Sandbach -head@thefermainacademy.org
  - Headteacher of The Keystone Academy – Alison Bellaby - head@thekeystoneacademy.org
- 1.12 External advice and support can be obtained from the Protect Charity, formerly Public Concern at Work - 020 3117 2520, (on-line) [Protect - Speak up stop harm - Protect - Speak up stop harm \(protect-advice.org.uk\)](https://www.protect-advice.org.uk)