



The Athelstan Trust

Whistleblowing Policy

This Whistleblowing Policy was provided by the Trust's solicitors, VWV, within the Trust's Employment Manual

- 1 **Wrongdoing at work:** This procedure is designed to deal with disclosure of information by an employee which relates to some danger, bribery, corruption, fraud or other unlawful or unethical conduct in the workplace. Employment legislation governs the making of disclosures concerning workplace activities and is intended to protect employees who blow the whistle on bad practice from being subjected to any detriment or from being unfairly dismissed as a result. This procedure is available to all employees who discover something they feel that they should pass on in the interests of the public. All types of wrongdoing are included whether they are acts committed by fellow employees, faults in Trust or Academy procedures or oversights which should be rectified. The procedure should be used even in the event that the act or omission causing you concern has finished or has not yet started.
- 2 **Safeguarding:** Nothing within this policy is intended to prevent staff from complying with their statutory obligations in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. In particular:
 - 2.1 **Safeguarding / Child Protection:** You should raise any initial safeguarding concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
 - 2.2 **Whistleblowing Policy:** You should follow this procedure to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practices at the Academy or potential failures by the Academy or staff to properly safeguard the welfare of pupils if you are concerned that the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are not being followed correctly.
 - 2.3 **Children's Social Care:** In exceptional circumstances, or if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care immediately.
- 3 **Grievances:** This procedure should not however be used where you have a complaint relating to your personal circumstances in the workplace. The Grievance Procedure contained in the Employment Manual should be used in such cases.
- 4 **Detriment:** Provided that this procedure is used appropriately and correctly you will not suffer any detriment as a result of reporting the wrongdoing. A failure to follow this procedure may however make the disclosure unreasonable and the protection given to you by this procedure may be lost.

Stage one

- 5 **Procedure:** You should disclose the suspected wrongdoing first to your Head of Department / Line Manager. In the event that your Head of Department / Line Manager is involved in the suspected wrongdoing, you shall be entitled to proceed directly to Stage Two of this procedure.
- 6 **Response:** You can expect a response detailing to whom the disclosure has been notified or any action taken within seven days of your Head of Department / Line Manager becoming aware of the disclosure.

Stage two

- 7 **Procedure:** If no response is forthcoming after seven days or if your Head of Department / Line Manager is involved in the suspected wrongdoing you shall be entitled to notify the Headteacher, as appropriate.



The Athelstan Trust

Whistleblowing Policy

- 8 **Response:** You can expect a response detailing any action taken within seven days of the Headteacher becoming aware of the disclosure.

Stage three

- 9 **Procedure:** If no such response is forthcoming you should inform Chief Executive Officer of the disclosure. Where the disclosure under Stage two was made to the Chief Executive Officer, you should inform one of the Trustees. The named Whistleblower Trustee is Karen Frost.

Stage four

- 10 **Outside body:** If you do not receive a response within seven days you shall be entitled to notify a relevant and appropriate body outside the Trust which may include:
- 10.1 the Local Authority Designated Officer;
 - 10.2 Children's Social Care;
 - 10.3 the Health and Safety Executive (**HSE**);
 - 10.4 the Environment Agency;
 - 10.5 the Information Commissioner;
 - 10.6 the Department for Education (**DfE**);
 - 10.7 the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (**BERR**);
 - 10.8 the Police;
 - 10.9 the Charity Commission;
 - 10.10 Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted).
- 11 **Bypassing the procedure:** In extreme circumstances you will have the right to raise your concern directly with a relevant and appropriate outside body without first having followed the stages above. This may however cause damage to the Trust and/or the Academy and the Trust and/or the Academy's reputation as well as constitute a breach of your own duty of confidentiality towards the Trust and this action should only be taken in extreme circumstances and after careful thought.
- 12 **Extreme circumstances:** The Trust will consider extreme circumstances exist where you have a reasonable belief that: the Trust or Academy will subject you to detriment if you inform your Head of Department / Line Manager in accordance with Stage one above or if you inform the Headteacher in accordance with Stage two or you inform the Chief Executive Officer or a Trustee in accordance with Stage three; a cover-up is being mounted by the Trust; or a disclosure made previously to your Head of Department / Line Manager or the Headteacher, Chief Executive Officer or a Trustee in accordance with the stages above has not prompted a satisfactory response.
- 13 **The media:** Even where extreme circumstances are thought to exist, you should under no circumstances approach a commercial body or the media with details of the suspected wrongdoing. If you approach any such body and / or where your concern is disclosed for personal gain, the Trust may consider this to be gross misconduct and immediate disciplinary action may be taken against you.
- 14 **Queries:** If you have any queries about this procedure, you should contact the Company Secretary.