



The Ace Academy

Whistleblowing Policy

1. Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Encourage staff to report concerns about wrongdoing or malpractice.
- Provide clear procedures for raising concerns confidentially.
- Protect whistleblowers from victimisation or retaliation.
- Promote a culture of openness, accountability, and integrity.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, volunteers, contractors, and governors.
- Concerns raised about any aspect of the academy's operations, including safeguarding, financial mismanagement, or unethical conduct.

3. What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information about suspected wrongdoing or dangers in the workplace that is in the public interest. This may include:

- Criminal offences or breaches of legal obligations.
- Miscarriages of justice.
- Health and safety risks.
- Safeguarding failures.
- Financial fraud or mismanagement.
- Deliberate concealment of any of the above.

4. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- DfE Whistleblowing Guidance for Schools

5. Raising a Concern

5.1 Internal Reporting

Concerns should be raised with:

- The Headteacher or Designated Whistleblowing Officer.
- If the concern involves the Headteacher, report to the Chair of Governors.

5.2 External Reporting

If internal reporting is not appropriate, concerns may be raised with:

- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Ofsted (for safeguarding concerns)
- The Department for Education (DfE)
- The charity Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work)

6. Confidentiality and Protection

- All concerns will be treated in confidence.
- Whistleblowers will not suffer detriment for raising concerns in good faith.
- Anonymous disclosures will be considered but may be harder to investigate.

7. Investigation Process

- An initial assessment will determine whether a full investigation is warranted.
- Investigations will be conducted fairly, promptly, and confidentially.
- Outcomes may include disciplinary action, policy changes, or external referrals.

8. Malicious Allegations

- Deliberately false or malicious allegations may result in disciplinary action.
- This policy is not a substitute for the grievance procedure for personal complaints.

9. Training and Awareness

- All staff will receive training on whistleblowing procedures.
- The policy will be published on the academy website and staff handbook.

10. Monitoring and Review

- The policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body.
- Records of concerns and outcomes will be maintained securely.