

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.
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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.
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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.
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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.