



Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

April 2022

CONTENTS

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Who is this policy for?

This policy applies to all worker/employees of the Trust.

This Policy Statement

The aim is to provide employees/workers with an avenue to raise concerns internally and receive feedback on any action taken

Review date

This policy will next be reviewed before September 2024.

Revision History

REVISION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	AUTHOR
1	Sept 2020	Update References and consolidate Guidance	Emma Mayor
2	April 2022	Add in references to Modern Slavery	Karen Bromage

4.3 If a worker/employee requests that their identity is protected, the Trust will not disclose it unless required to do so in law. If the situation arises where the Trust is unable to resolve the concern without revealing the worker/employees' identity (for instance because the worker/employee's evidence is needed in court), the Trust will discuss with the worker/employee how the matter should proceed. However, it must be stated that if a worker/employee chooses not to disclose their identity it will be much more difficult for us to look into the matter or to protect your position or to give the worker/employee feedback.

4.4 No action will be taken against anyone who makes an allegation in good faith, reasonably believing it to be true, even if the allegation is not subsequently confirmed by the investigation. However, this policy does not provide protection to workers/employees who disclose information to the media or the press under the guise of 'whistleblowing'. It is important that if the worker/employee has a genuine concern, you follow the stages of this policy to ensure its resolution.

4.5 Any investigation into allegations of malpractice will not influence or be influenced by any disciplinary or redundancy procedures already taking place concerning the employee/worker.

4.6 Support will be provided to the worker/employee in order to minimise any difficulties, which the employee/worker may experience. This may include advice on giving evidence if needed. Meetings may, if necessary, be arranged off-site with the worker/employee and the worker/employee has the right to be represented, if the worker/employee so wishes.

5. STAGE ONE – HOW TO RAISE CONCERNS

5.1 If the worker/employee is unsure whether to use this Whistleblowing Procedure or the worker/employee wants independent advice at any stage, the worker/employee is advised to contact:

- If applicable the worker/employee's trade union; or
- The independent charity 'Protect' (formerly Public Concern at Work) on 020 3117 2520. Their lawyers can give the worker/employee confidential advice at any stage about how to raise a concern about serious malpractice at work.

5.2 As soon as the worker/employee becomes reasonably concerned the worker/employee should firstly raise the issue either orally or in writing. It would help with any subsequent investigation if the background/history of the concern, including relevant dates and the reason why the situation gives particular cause for concern

6. HOW THE TRUST WILL RESPOND

6.1 Once the worker/employee has reported their concern, an investigating officer (someone who has no previous involvement) will be appointed who will look into it to assess initially what action should be taken. They will aim to interview the worker/employee within 10 working days, in confidence, or earlier if there is an immediate danger to loss of life or serious injury or illegal activity that need immediate Police involvement and will:

- Obtain as much information as possible from the worker/employee about the grounds for the belief of malpractice;
- Consult with the worker/employee about fur

- The matter is already (or has been) the subject of proceedings under one of the Trust's other procedures or policies;
- The matter concerned is already the subject of legal proceedings, or has already been referred to the Police, the external auditors, the DfE or other public authority.

6.5 Usually, within 10 working days of a concern being raised, the person investigating will write to the person raising the concern:

- Confirming that the concern has been investigated (or a timescale for this if complex);
- Confirming (where appropriate) what action the Trust intends to take;
- Supplying information on support available to you.

Subject to any legal constraints, the relevant employee will normally be informed of the final outcome of any investigation.

7. STAGE TWO - HOW CONCERNS CAN BE TAKEN FURTHER

7.1 Worker/employees of the Trust and its academies who are not satisfied, at any stage of the process, with the action taken by the Trust and feel that it is right to question the matter further, may consider the following possible contact points:

- The employee's trade union;
- The Citizen's Advice Bureau and/or law centre/firm;
- Relevant professional bodies or regulatory organisations (e.g. exam boards);
- The Information Commissioner;

8. WHISTLEBLOWING AND CHILD PROTECTION/ SAFEGUARDING

8.1 All staff and volunteers in our academies must comply with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', which includes taking action to protect a child who may be at risk of harm or in need of services, and to make appropriate referrals to children's social care. Any member of staff should press for re-consideration if they believe a child is not being safeguarded. Safeguarding issues raised by a whistleblower will be handled in line with the relevant LSCB child protection procedures.

8.2 This section should be read in conjunction with:

- The Academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy & Procedures
- Delta Trust 'Dealing with Allegations against Staff' Policy
- The relevant LSCB procedures
- Keeping children safe in education (DfE 2019)
- What to do if you're

10. REVIEW

10.1 This policy will be reviewed by the Trust annually, or earlier if there are changes to the relevant legislation.