

# **CHULMLEIGH ACADEMY TRUST**

## **WHISTLE-BLOWING POLICY**

**The policy was adopted by the Directors on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE**

- 1.1 Chulmleigh Academy Trust ('the Trust') is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability and to providing education and all its services with honesty and integrity. In line with that commitment the purpose of this policy is to encourage anyone with concerns about any aspect of the Trust's work to come forward and express their concerns and to set out how the Trust will respond.
- 1.2 This policy covers all employees, directors, consultants, contractors, volunteers, casual workers and agency workers.
- 1.3 This policy does not form any part of any employee's contract of employment and the Trust may amend it at any time.

## **2 WHAT IS WHISTLEBLOWING?**

- 2.1 Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to the Trust's activities. This includes:
  - 2.1.1 bribery;
  - 2.1.2 fraud;
  - 2.1.3 other criminal activity;
  - 2.1.4 any breach of legal or professional obligations; or
  - 2.1.5 miscarriages of justice;
  - 2.1.6 health and safety risks;
  - 2.1.7 safeguarding risks; or
  - 2.1.8 damage to the environment.
- 2.2 If you have concerns or issues in relation to how you have been treated then you should raise this under the grievance procedure.
- 2.3 If you have doubts or questions about any aspect of this policy then please speak to your immediate line manager.

## **3 HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN**

- 3.1 The Trust recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one, but it hopes that in many cases you will be able to raise any concerns with your immediate line manager. Your immediate line manager should in turn raise your concerns with either the Executive Headteacher or Chair of the Board of Directors of the Trust.
- 3.2 You may raise a concern in person or in writing.
- 3.3 However, where you prefer not to raise your concerns with your immediate line manager for any reason, you should contact:

- 3.3.1 their line manager; or
  - 3.3.2 if the allegation is concerning that person, the Executive Headteacher or Chair of the Board of Directors of the Trust whose contact details are at the end of this policy.
- 3.4 The Trust will arrange a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You may bring a colleague or union representative to any meetings under this policy. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.
- 3.5 The Trust will then form a view about the best way to proceed with an investigation and you will be informed (as appropriate) about the steps being taken in respect of your concern. If you remain dissatisfied then you may raise a grievance under our Grievance Policy.

#### **4 CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 4.1 The Trust hopes that staff will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. Completely anonymous disclosures are difficult to investigate. If you want to raise your concern confidentially, the Trust will make every effort to keep your identity secret and only reveal it where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern.

#### **5 EXTERNAL DISCLOSURES**

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. Public Concern at Work operates a confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

#### **6 PROTECTION AND SUPPORT FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS**

- 6.1 The Trust aims to encourage openness and will support whistleblowers who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.
- 6.2 Whistleblowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a genuine concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform your line manager immediately. If the matter is not remedied you should raise it formally under the grievance procedure.
- 6.3 You must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. If you are involved in such conduct you may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 6.4 Public Concern at Work operates a confidential helpline. Their contact details are:

Public Concern at Work (Independent whistleblowing charity)	Helpline: (020) 7404 6609 E-mail: <a href="mailto:whistle@pcaw.co.uk">whistle@pcaw.co.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.pcaw.co.uk">www.pcaw.co.uk</a>
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Contact details:

**Executive Headteacher / Chair of Chulmleigh Academy Trust Board of Directors**

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# END OF POLICY