



St Edward's  
Church of England  
Academy

# Whistleblowing Policy

Approved by Governors:

Statutory Policy

RECOGNISE • **E**NCOURAGE • **S**TRIVE • **P**REPARE • **E**MPATHISE • **C**HRISTIAN • **T**EAMWORK



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## **The Vision for Education within a Church of England Academy**

There are fundamental reasons, rooted in the Bible, which have motivated centuries of Christian involvement in schooling in this country and around the world. The God of all creation is concerned with everything related to education.

There is a fresh articulation of the Church of England's vision for education as we meet the challenges and take the opportunities offered by the present situation. It is not simply for Church schools but, recognising the Church of England's involvement in education over many centuries, seeks to promote educational excellence everywhere, for everyone. In Church schools like St Edward's Church of England Academy, the deeply Christian foundation for this vision will be seen explicitly in teaching and learning both in RE and across the curriculum, and also in the authentically Christian worship and ethos. The Church's vision for education can be expressed and promoted as one of human flourishing that inspires what the school is and does.

The vision is deeply Christian, with the promise by Jesus of 'life in all its fullness' at its heart. This vision embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people. We offer a vision of human flourishing for all, one that embraces excellence and academic rigour, but set them in a wider framework. This is worked out theologically and educationally through four basic elements which permeate our vision for education:

- Wisdom
- Hope
- Community
- Dignity

The vision, in line with the Church of England's role as the established Church, is for the common good of the whole human community and its environment, whether national, regional or local. It is hospitable to diversity, respects freedom of religion and belief, and encourages others to contribute from the depths of their own traditions and understandings. It invites collaboration, alliances, negotiation of differences, and the



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forming of new settlements in order to serve the flourishing of a healthily plural society and democracy, together with a healthily plural educational system.



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## St Edward's Church of England Academy Ethos and Values

The ethos and values of St Edward's Church of England Academy are based on the teachings of Jesus Christ and underpin everything that we are and do, which is encompassed in the word 'RESPECT'.

Each letter links to the Academy motto – *Learn for Life*

### ***'Learn for Life'***

- **R**ecognise and **E**ncourage - everyone's potential, individual skills and talents
- **S**trive to be the best we can be
- **P**repare for the challenges of life
- **E**mpathise - promoting the values of respect, kindness, compassion, fairness, forgiveness, love, honesty and trust
- **C**hristian – a community where we learn from the teachings of Jesus so that we can contribute to the family of St Edward's and beyond
- **T**eamwork – an environment where we work together so we can all achieve our potential



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## Whistleblowing Policy

St Edward's Church of England Academy is committed to operating with honesty and integrity. We expect all colleagues to operate on this basis and to adhere to the Academy's policies, procedures and code of conduct. Fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing will not be tolerated.

The aim of this policy is to encourage colleagues to report suspected wrongdoing internally rather than externally as a first resort. Any concerns raised under this policy will be treated seriously and dealt with confidentially.

Any colleague raising a concern under this policy will not be treated less favourably for raising concerns as outlined in this procedure. This means that any colleague who raises a concern under this policy will not be subjected to a detriment nor will they be dismissed for doing so.

Any reference to 'the Academy' refers to St Edward's Church of England Academy. This policy applies to employees of St Edward's Church of England Academy, referred to in this policy as colleagues including agency workers, trainees or anyone working on a casual basis.

The policy and procedure applies to all colleagues, regardless of length of service, but does not form part of the contract of employment and can be varied from time to time.

### **What is whistleblowing?**

Whistleblowing is when a worker reports suspected wrongdoing at work. For example

- A criminal offence; and/or
- A miscarriage of justice; and/or
- Damage to the environment; and/or
- A danger to health and safety; and/or
- A deliberate concealment of any of the



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A colleague can report things that are not right, are illegal or if anyone at work is neglecting their duties, including:

- Someone's health and safety is in danger
- Damage to the environment
- A criminal offence
- The company isn't obeying the law (like not having the right insurance)
- Covering up wrongdoing

A colleague who has a reasonable belief that a wrongdoing has or may be committed and raises a genuine concern relating to any of the above, is a whistleblower and is protected under this policy.

The Academy will, at its discretion, consider disclosures that are made anonymously, although such disclosures are inevitably much less powerful. The Academy will also treat every disclosure in confidence, and only reveal the identity of the person making it if absolutely necessary (e.g. if required in connection with legal action).

### **Rights of the Whistleblower**

All colleagues are encouraged to use this policy to raise genuine concerns and will not be treated less favourably for doing so, even if they are mistaken in their belief.

Any colleague who raises a concern under this policy will not be subjected to a detriment nor will they be dismissed for doing so. Any colleague who believes that they have been subjected to a detriment for raising a complaint should raise the matter with the Principal.

Victimisation of a whistleblower by any other colleague for raising a concern under this policy will in itself constitute a disciplinary offence.

Where the Academy believes that a colleague has knowingly made a false allegation or acted maliciously, the colleague will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include dismissal for gross misconduct.



This policy does not deal with any complaints relating to a colleague's own treatment at work or own contract of employment. Those matters should be raised under the Grievance procedure.

An exception to this will be when the matter of concern arises from the colleague's own treatment at work that is arising from the whistleblowing matter they have raised previously.

## **Making a Whistleblowing Complaint**

To make a whistleblowing complaint the whistleblower has to meet certain conditions.

If the disclosure is made to the Academy, it must be in the public interest and the person making the complaint ("the whistleblower") has a reasonable suspicion that the alleged malpractice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.

If the disclosure is made to a regulatory body then as well as satisfying the conditions required for disclosure to the council, the whistleblower must also honestly and reasonably believe that the information they provide and any allegations contained in it are substantially true.

For example, a colleague will be eligible for protection if:

- They honestly think what they're reporting is true
- They think they're telling the right person
- They believe that their disclosure is in the public interest

If the disclosure is made to other external bodies then as well as satisfying the conditions required for to the Academy, in all circumstances of the case it must be reasonable for them to make the complaint. Further the whistleblower must:

- Reasonably believe that they would be victimised if they raised the matter internally or to a regulatory body or,
- Reasonably believe that evidence is likely to be concealed or destroyed or,
- Have already raised the concern with the council and/or relevant regulatory body and,
- Reasonably believe that the information they provide and any allegations contained therein are substantially true





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If the disclosure is made to other external bodies and is of an "exceptionally serious" nature – which in a local government setting could include, say, the alleged abuse of children or vulnerable adults in an authority's care or corruption then the whistleblower will not be required to:

- Have raised the matter concerned internally first
- Believe that they will be subject to a detriment for raising the disclosure internally
- Believe that the evidence is likely to be concealed or destroyed.

A colleague who wants to raise a wrongdoing should in the first instance inform any member of the Senior Leadership Team, in the case of it being Senior Leadership Team then the Principal and if Principal then Governors, details of whom can be found on the whistleblowing page on the intranet/SLN.

The initial contact can be by telephone or in writing and, if the latter, should be in a sealed envelope addressed to the officer concerned and marked: 'PIDA – Strictly Private and Confidential'. E-mail cannot be guaranteed as a secure medium and it is not recommended as a channel for reporting issues related to this policy.

The Senior Leadership Team/Principal/Governors who has received a disclosure will:

- Acknowledge its receipt, in writing, within 5 working days
- Seek further information if required, which may include a personal interview, at which the colleague (whistleblower) can be accompanied by a representative of their trade union or professional association, or by a fellow employee
- When the precise nature of the alleged wrongdoing is established, refer the disclosure to the Principal
- The Principal will keep the individual informed regarding the progress and in all cases (subject to legal constraints) provide details of the outcome of any investigation

On receipt of a disclosure from a Contact Officer, the Principal will determine what further action, if any, is needed, which may comprise:

- Internal investigation
- Report to the Police
- Report to external audit



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- Independent enquiry
- Any combination of the above

The Principal will also ensure that the Governors are advised of progress and outcome.

If the colleague does not reasonably believe that appropriate action has been taken in relation to their concern, then they may raise it externally to the prescribed regulator or our external auditors. The charity, Public Concern at Work, can advise the colleague about raising the concern externally. This will include advising who the appropriate prescribed regulator is. The website for Public Concern at Work is

<http://www.pcaw.co.uk/>

### Levels of Authority

Throughout this policy document, there are many references to Contact Officer. For the purposes of this policy 'Contact Officer' is the person delegated by the Director to perform the task. The Contact Officers are listed on the whistleblowing page on the intranet/SLN.

Version	Author	Implementation Date	Revision Detail
1.0	Strategic HR		
2.0	Strategic HR		
3.0	Strategic HR		



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## **Appendix 1:**

**Policies that are referred to within or should be read in conjunction with this policy are:**



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## **Glossary:**