



FRAMWELLGATE SCHOOL DURHAM

Title and Description

Whistleblowing Policy

Date of last review

June 2017

Approved by

Academy Trust Board

To be reviewed by

Academy Trust Board

Responsibility

Academy Business Director

Review period

Two yearly

Date of next review

June 2019

Whistleblowing policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Policy is related to the school's stated vision and values. This policy outlines the requirement of good practice for sharing of information where there are concerns by staff that the academy is at risk through the actions of a colleague or colleagues.
- 1.2 The academy is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability and expects employees (and others linked to the school) who have serious concerns to voice these concerns.
- 1.3 As part of this commitment the Academy and the Trust Board are committed to combating any acts of impropriety wherever they may arise in relation to any of the Academy's activities or services. In achieving this aim, Trust Board has put in place arrangements to ensure high standards are maintained and that any act of impropriety is prevented or is detected at an early stage.
- 1.4 The Academy realises, however that despite its best efforts, impropriety (e.g. unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, conducting activity which may present a danger to the public, employees or the environment) can be discovered by chance. It is often through the alertness of not only their workers but members of the public, other authorities or agencies, service users, partners or suppliers / contractors etc. that impropriety is detected. Consequently the Trust Board acknowledges the important role that these parties, including the local community, have to play in helping the Academy to maintain high standards and are keen to involve them in its arrangements for the detection of acts of impropriety.

2 Commitment

- 2.1 The Academy's Trust Board is committed to the principle that where any person, i.e. worker, Governor, member of the public or any other external body, becomes aware of, or has concerns about, activity in the Academy which appears to fall below its high standards of honesty, integrity, openness and accountability, they should be reported promptly to the Academy or another appropriate body.
- 2.2 As part of this commitment the Trust Board acknowledges the need to encourage any person who believes that there may be something seriously wrong within the Academy or who may have concerns about any aspect of the Academy's work to come forward and voice those concerns. The Trust Board is committed to creating and maintaining a culture whereby any individual who seeks to express concerns and suspicions may do so with confidence, without fear of repercussion or intimidation and in the knowledge that the information will be treated confidentially and will be investigated fully and rigorously.
- 2.3 Concerns might involve conduct which is a breach of the law, a failure to comply with a legal obligation, health & safety risks, unauthorised use of funds, fraud or the abuse of others (sexual, physical or other forms of abuse). Generally concerns will be about serious unethical or unprofessional conduct.

3 Aims

- 3.1 The aim of this policy is to provide a framework to enable staff to feel confident in coming forward to raise concerns.
- 3.2 This protocol applies to all employees at the school including temporary, agency, authorised volunteers or those on a work experience placement.
- 3.3 This document can be read in conjunction with the Data Protection Policy.

3.4 The academy recognises the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. If what is being reported is true the colleague will be doing their duty to their employer and those for whom they provide a service. The person raising concerns has the right to be protected, and the academy will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect colleagues if they raise a concern which is in the public interest.

4 **Principles and practice**

4.1 Issues that might be reported include:

- Conduct which is an offence or a breach of law.
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation.
- Health and safety risks
- The unauthorised use of public funds.
- Possible fraud and corruption
- Sexual, physical or other abuse
- Other unethical conduct.
- Actions which are unprofessional, inappropriate or conflict with a general understanding of what is right and wrong.

4.2 Other procedures are available to employees e.g., the Grievance procedure which relates to complaints about your own employment. This policy does not replace the complaints procedure.

4.3 All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal the identity of the person raising the concern if so wished. At the appropriate time, however, they may need to come forward as a witness and anonymity cannot be guaranteed at this time.

4.4 As a first step, a member of staff with concerns should raise their concerns with their immediate line manager. This may depend, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of the malpractice. For example, if you believe that management is involved you should approach a more senior level of management within the school.

4.5 If your concerns are around the Head teacher, you must raise your concerns with the Chair of the Trust Board.