

Lacey Green Primary Academy Whistle Blowing Policy



Aspire to achieve

Lacey Green Primary Academy agree that 'whistle blowing' is the "raising of concerns about misconduct within an organisation". We actively encourage all Academy personnel to report any serious concerns about any aspect of the Academy or the conduct of its personnel or others acting on behalf of the Academy. We are committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability.

We believe that where the concern relates to an individual's own employment the Academy's Grievance Policy must be used. However, if the concern relates to something which is against the Academy's policies, falls below standards of practice or amounts to improper conduct then the procedures in this policy must be used.

We as a Academy community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Aims

- To encourage all Academy personnel to report any serious concerns about any aspect of the Academy or the conduct of its personnel or others acting on behalf of the Academy.
- To work with other Academy's to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

When a concern has been raised the following procedure will be followed:

When should it be used?

- This procedure is not designed to replace or be used as an alternative to the grievance procedure, which should be used where an employee is only aggrieved about his/her own situation
- Employees who are worried about wrong doing at work do not necessarily have a personal grievance
- Employees must act in good faith and must have reasonable grounds for believing the information to be accurate

- No employee who uses this procedure in good faith will be penalised for doing so. The Academy will not tolerate harassment and/or victimisation of any employee raising concerns
- An employee who is not sure whether the conduct he/she is concerned about does constitute illegal or improper conduct or is unsure about how to proceed can contact any of the names listed below for advice.
- Financial regulations require any employee who suspects fraud, corruption or other financial irregularity to ensure this is reported to the Chief Internal Auditor for possible investigation. Normally, you must first report any suspicion of such an irregularity to the Headteacher, who will in turn report it to the Chair of Finance Committee. In most cases, this will be done through your line management structure

Examples of Illegal and/or Improper Conduct

- fraudulent or improper use of the Academy's money or assets
- abuse of pupils or of other employees
- dangerous practices at work
- corruptly receiving any gift or advantage
- allowing private interests and those of the Academy to conflict

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has:

- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all Academy personnel and visitors to the Academy are aware of and comply with this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring that the Academy complies with all equalities legislation;
- nominated a designated Equalities governor to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

Role of the Principal

The Principal will:

- ensure all Academy personnel and volunteers are aware of and comply with this policy;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;

Support for Academy Personnel

The Governing Body will provide support for both:

- the member of staff who has raised the concern;

- the member of staff against whom allegations have been made
- During the investigation the Governing Body will keep both parties informed of all progress.
- No action will be taken against a member of staff if, after investigation, their concern has not been confirmed.
- Disciplinary action will be taken if a concern is raised frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain.

Confidentiality

All raised concerns are investigated and every effort is made to ensure confidentiality for all parties.

Raising a Concern

As a first step you should normally raise concerns with your immediate manager or Principal. However, depending on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issue it may be appropriate to raise the issue with the Chair of Governors or Trustees.

Concerns are best raised in writing. Staff are encouraged to use the following format:

- The background and history of the concern
- The reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation

If you are not able to put your concern in writing you should meet with the appropriate person as detailed above.

You are encouraged to put your name to your allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful but will be considered at the discretion of the Governing Body in line with corporate guidelines.

You may wish to consider discussing your concern with a colleague or trade union representative, you may wish to bring a representative along to any meetings you may have.

The Academy recognises that reporting a concern can be difficult. If you raise a concern in good faith you will have nothing to fear. All concerns raised will be treated in confidence and every effort made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. However, you need to be aware that you may need to come forward as a witness. The Principal will appoint another member of the senior management team to be your welfare lead. Should your concern involve the Principal or Head of School, the Chair of Governors will make the necessary appointment.

How the Academy will respond

The Academy will respond to your concerns. Do not forget that testing out your concerns is not the same as either accepting them or rejecting them. Where appropriate the matter raised may:

- Be investigated within the Academy
- Be referred to the Chair of Governors
- Be referred to the Trustees
- Be referred to the police
- Form the subject of an independent enquiry

If the matter is dealt with within Academy, the Principal (or another member of the management team nominated by the Head of Academy) or Governing Body will respond to the concern. Where there is a concern regarding the Principal or Head of School, the Chair of Governors will respond.

If you are not satisfied with any action taken or you feel it is right to take the matter outside the Academy the following are possible contacts points:

- Your solicitor
- Your trade union
- Your local Citizens Advice Bureau
- Relevant professional bodies or regulatory organisations
- A relevant voluntary organisation (eg Public Concern at Work 0207 404 6609)
- The Police
- The Audit Commission via a special telephone hotline – 0303 444 8330

However, please be aware that you may not necessarily be informed of the outcome of your concern.

Disclosures

- Academy personnel have a duty to the Academy not to disclose confidential information.
- However, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 this does not prevent an employee from seeking independent advice nor discussing their concern with the charity Public Concern.

Training

We ensure all Academy personnel have equal chances of training, career development and promotion.

Periodic training will be organised for all Academy personnel so that they are kept up to date with new information and guide lines concerning equal opportunities.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this Academy.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Academy's Complaints Procedure Policy.

Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the Principal.