



Helping people living in extraordinary circumstances to live ordinary lives

# Kingsley Learning Foundation Trust

## Whistleblowing Policy

Chair Signature: *D. Withers*

Approved by Policy Working Group: **Autumn 2025**

Reviewed by Governors: **Autumn 2025**

Review Cycle: **2 Years**

## Contents Page

Point	Contents	Page
1	<b>Aims</b>	3
2	<b>Legislation</b>	3
3	<b>Definition of whistleblowing</b>	3
4	<b>Procedure for staff to raise a whistleblowing concern</b>	3
5	<b>Trust procedure for responding to a whistleblowing concern</b>	4
6	<b>Malicious or vexatious allegations</b>	5
7	<b>Escalating concerns beyond the trust</b>	5
8	<b>Approval</b>	5

### 1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Encourage individuals affected to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and that their confidentiality will be respected
- Let all staff in the Trust know how to raise concerns about potential wrongdoing in or by the Trust
- Set clear procedures for how the Trust will respond to such concerns
- Let all staff know the protection available to them if they raise a whistleblowing concern
- Assure staff that they will not be victimised for raising a legitimate concern through the steps set out in the policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken (though vexatious or malicious concerns may be considered a disciplinary issue).

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time. The policy applies to all employees or other workers who provide services to the trust in any capacity including self-employed consultants or contractors who provide services on a personal basis and agency workers.

### 2. Legislation

The requirement to have clear whistleblowing procedures in place is set out in the [Academy Trust Handbook](#).

This policy has been written in line with the above document, as well as [government guidance on whistleblowing](#). We also take into account the [Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

### 3. Definition of whistleblowing

Whistleblowing covers concerns made that report wrongdoing that is "in the public interest". Examples of whistleblowing include (but are not limited to):

- Criminal offences, such as fraud or corruption
- Pupils' or staff health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement

- Breaches of financial management procedures
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest
- Damage to the environment.

A whistleblower is a person who raises a genuine concern relating to the above.

Not all concerns about the Trust count as whistleblowing. For example, personal staff grievances such as bullying or harassment do not usually count as whistleblowing. If something affects a staff member as an individual, or relates to an individual employment contract, this is likely a grievance.

When staff have a concern they should consider whether it would be better to follow our staff grievance or complaints procedures.

Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work) has:

- [Further guidance](#) on the difference between a whistleblowing concern and a grievance that staff may find useful if unsure
- A free and confidential [advice line](#).

## 4. Procedure for staff to raise a whistleblowing concern

### 4.1 When to raise a concern

Staff should consider the examples in section 3 when deciding whether their concern is of a whistleblowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or Trust procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

### 4.2 Who to report to

Staff should report their concern to the Headteacher. If the concern is about the Headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the CEO or Chair of the Board of Trustees.

### 4.3 How to raise the concern

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible, however, staff may raise concerns verbally if they feel more comfortable doing so. In such cases, the recipient should make a written record of the concern as soon as practicable. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

## 5. Trust procedure for responding to a whistleblowing concern

### 5.1 Investigating the concern

When a concern is received by the Headteacher – referred to from here as the ‘recipient’ – they will:

- Meet with the person raising the concern within a reasonable time. The person raising the concern may be joined by a trade union or professional association representative
- Get as much detail as possible about the concern at this meeting, and record the information. If it becomes apparent the concern is not of a whistleblowing nature, the recipient should handle the concern in line with the appropriate policy/procedure
- Reiterate, at this meeting, that they are protected from any unfair treatment or risk of dismissal as a result of raising the concern. If the concern is found to be malicious or vexatious, disciplinary action may be taken (see section 6)
- Establish whether there is sufficient cause for concern to warrant further investigation. If there is:
  - The recipient should then arrange a further investigation into the matter, involving the Headteacher, Chair of Governors, Chair of the Board, if appropriate. In some cases, they may need to bring in an external, independent body to investigate. In other cases, they may need to report the matter to the police
  - The person who raised the concern should be informed of how the matter is being investigated and an estimated timeframe for when they will be informed of the next steps.

### 5.2 Outcome of the investigation

Once the investigation – whether this was just the initial investigation of the concern, or whether further investigation was needed – is complete, the investigating person(s) will prepare a report detailing the findings and confirming whether or not any wrongdoing has occurred. The report will include any recommendations and details on how the matter can be rectified, and whether or not a referral is required to an external organisation, such as the local authority or police.

They will inform the person who raised the concern of the outcome of the investigation, though certain details may need to be restricted due to confidentiality. Where it is not possible to provide full details, the Trust will explain the reasons for this to the individual who raised the concern.

Beyond the immediate actions, the Headteacher, Trustees and other staff, if necessary, will review the relevant policies and procedures to prevent future occurrences of the same wrongdoing.

Whilst we cannot always guarantee the outcome sought, we will try to deal with concerns fairly and in an appropriate way.

## **6. Malicious or vexatious allegations**

Staff are encouraged to raise concerns when they believe there to potentially be an issue. If an allegation is made in good faith, but the investigation finds no wrongdoing, there will be no disciplinary action against the member of staff who raised the concern.

If, however, an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the Trust will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the person making the allegation.

## **7. Escalating concerns beyond the Trust**

The Trust encourages staff to raise their concerns internally, in line with section 4 of this policy, but recognise that staff may feel the need to report concerns to an external body. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

- General advice on whistleblowing can be found at [whistleblowing for employees](#)
- The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by the Trust. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 - the line is available from 08:00 to 20:00 Monday to Friday, and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

## **8. Approval**

This policy will be reviewed at least every 2 years, or sooner if there are changes to relevant legislation or guidance.

These procedures have been agreed by the Board of Trustees, who will approve them whenever reviewed.

## Appendix 1 – LIST OF EXTERNAL PRESCRIBED PERSONS

Prescribed Persons	Matters in respect of which the person is prescribed:	Contact
<b>The Audit Commission for England and Wales</b> (including auditors appointed by the Commission)	<i>The proper conduct of public business, value for money, fraud and corruption in local government, and health service, bodies</i>	The Audit Commission 1 Vincent Square London, SW1P 2PN Tel: 020 7630 1019
<b>The Certification Officer</b>	<i>Fraud, and other irregularities, relating to the financial affairs of trade unions and employers' associations</i>	Certification Officer Brandon House 180 Borough High Street London, SE1 1LW Tel: 020 7210 3734/3735 Fax: 020 7210 3612
<b>The Charity Commissioners for England and Wales</b>	<i>The proper administration of charities and of funds given or held for charitable purposes</i>	Charity Commission Liverpool Head of Operations 2nd Floor 20 Kings Parade Queens Dock Liverpool L3 4DQ Tel: 0870 3330123 Fax: 0151 703 1556
<b>Chief Executive of the Criminal Cases Review Commission</b>	<i>Actual or potential miscarriages of justice</i> (The Commission has responsibility for these matters in respect of England, Wales and Northern Ireland)	Criminal Cases Review Commission Alpha Tower Suffolk Street Queensway Birmingham B1 1TT Tel: 0121 633 1800 Fax: 0121 633 1804 Email: <a href="mailto:info@ccrc.gov.uk">info@ccrc.gov.uk</a>

<b>Independent Police Complaints Commission</b>	<i>Matters relating to the conduct of a person serving with the police (as defined in section 12(7) of the Police reform Act 2002) or of any other person in relation to whose conduct the Independent Police Complaints Commission exercises functions in or under any legislation.</i>	Independent Police Complaints Commission 90 High Holborn London WC1V 6BH Tel: 020 7166 3000
<b>The Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection</b>	<i>Matters connected with (a) the provision of health care for the purposes of the National Health Service (where "health care" has the same meaning as in section 45(2) of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003), (b) the provision of independent health care services within the meaning of section 5A(8) of the Care Standards Act 2000, or (c) any activities not covered by (a) and (b) in relation to which the Commission exercises its functions</i>	Chief Executive Healthcare Commission Finsbury Tower 103-105 Bunhill Row London, EC1Y 8TG Tel: 010 7448 9200 Email: <a href="mailto:feedback@healthcarecommission.org.uk">feedback@healthcarecommission.org.uk</a>
<b>The Commission for Social Care Inspection</b>	<i>Matters relating to the provision of regulated social care services as defined in the Care Standards Act 2000, and the inspection and performance assessment of English local authority social services as defined in section 148 of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003</i>	Chief Inspector Commission for Social Care Inspection 33 Greycoat Street London, SW1P 2QF Tel: 020 7979 2000 Fax: 020 7979 2111 Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk">enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.csci.gov.uk">www.csci.gov.uk</a>
<b>The Commissioners for Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs</b>	<i>Value added tax, insurance premium tax, excise duties and landfill tax. The import and export of prohibited or restricted goods, Income tax, corporation tax, capital gains tax, petroleum revenue tax, inheritance tax, stamp duties, national insurance contributions, statutory maternity pay, statutory sick pay, tax credits, child benefits, collection of student loans and the enforcement of the national minimum wage</i>	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs Cross Cutting Policy Room 1E/04 1 Parliament Street London, SW1A 2BQ Tel: freephone 0900 595000 Fax: free fax 0800 523 0506 Email: <a href="mailto:customs.confidential@hmrc.gov.uk">customs.confidential@hmrc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Comptroller and Auditor General of the National Audit Office</b>	<i>The proper conduct of public business, value for money, fraud and corruption in relation to the provision of centrally funded public services</i>	The Comptroller and Auditor General National Audit Office 157-197 Buckingham Palace Road Victoria London, SW1W 9SP Tel: 020 7798 7999

<b>Director General of Water Services</b>	<i>The supply of water and the provision of sewerage services</i>	Director General of Water Services Office of Water Services Centre City Tower 7 Hill Street Birmingham B5 4UA Tel: 0121 625 1300 / Fax: 0121 625 1400
<b>The Director of the Serious Fraud Office</b>	<i>Serious or complex fraud</i>	The Director of the Serious Fraud Office Elm House 10-16 Elm Street London, WC1X 0BJ Tel: 020 7239 7272 / Fax: 020 7837 1689
<b>The Environment Agency</b>	<i>Acts or omissions which have an actual or potential effect on the environment or the management or regulation of the environment including those relating to pollution, abstraction of water, flooding, the flow of rivers, inland fisheries and migratory salmon or trout</i>	The Environment Agency Rio House Waterside Drive Aztec West Almondsbury Bristol BS12 4UD Tel: 0800 807060 (24 hour line) or enquiries 01454 624400 / Fax: 01454 624409
<b>Food Standards Agency</b>	<i>Matters which may affect the health of any member of the public in relation to the consumption of food and other matters concerning the protection of the interests of consumers in relation to food</i>	Personnel and Establishments Division Food Standards Agency Room 111C Aviation House 125 Kingsway London, WC2B 6NH Tel: 020 7276 8120 / Fax: 020 7276 8132

<p><b>Financial Services Authority</b></p>	<p><i>The carrying on of investment business or of insurance business. The operation of banks and building societies, deposit-taking businesses and wholesale money market regimes. The operation of friendly societies, benevolent societies, working men's clubs, specially authorised societies and industrial and provident societies. The functioning of financial markets, investment exchanges and clearing houses. Money laundering, financial crime, and other serious financial misconduct, in connection with activities regulated by the Financial Services Authority</i></p>	<p>Director, Authorisation Financial Services Authority 25 The North Colonnade Canary Wharf London E14 5HS Tel: 020 7676 4646 / Fax: 020 7676 9727 Email: <a href="mailto:whistle@fsa.gov.uk">whistle@fsa.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>General Social Care Council.</b></p>	<p><i>Matters relating to the registration of social care workers under the Care Standards Act 2000</i></p>	<p>General Social Care Council Goldings House 2 Hays Lane London, SE1 2HB Tel: 020 7397 5100 / Fax: 020 7397 5145 <a href="http://www.gsc.org.uk">www.gsc.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Health and Safety Executive</b></p>	<p><i>Matters which may affect the health or safety of any individual at work; matters which may affect the health and safety of any member of the public arising out of, or in connection with, the activities of persons at work.</i> local authority which under section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 is responsible for the enforcement of the relevant statutory provisions <b>contact</b> the appropriate local authority</p>	<p>Health and Safety Executive Information Services Caerphilly Business Park Caerphilly South Wales CF83 3GG Tel: 0845 345 0055 / Fax: 0845 408 9566 Email: <a href="mailto:hse.infoline@natbrit.com">hse.infoline@natbrit.com</a></p>
<p><b>Information Commissioner</b></p>	<p><i>Compliance with the requirements of legislation relating to data protection and to freedom of information*</i> <i>(*Data protection legislation regulates the processing of information relating to individuals, including the obtaining, holding, use or disclosure of such information)</i> <i>(*Freedom of information legislation provides for the disclosure by public authorities of the information that they hold)</i></p>	<p>The Office of the Information Commissioner Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF Tel: 01625 545700 / Fax: 01625 524510 Email: <a href="mailto:mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk">mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk</a></p>

<p><b>The Pensions Regulator</b></p>	<p><i>Matters relating to occupational pension schemes and other private pension arrangements</i></p>	<p>The Pensions Regulator          Napier House          Trafalgar Place          Brighton. BN1 4DW          Tel: 0870 6063636          Textphone: 0870 2433123 / Fax: 0870 2411144          E-mail: <a href="mailto:customersupport@thepensionsregulator.gsi.gov.uk">customersupport@thepensionsregulator.gsi.gov.uk</a>          Website: <a href="http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk">www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Standards Board for England</b></p>	<p><i>Breaches by a member or co-opted member of a relevant authority (as defined in section 49(6) of the Local Government Act 2000) of that authority's code of conduct</i></p>	<p>The Standards Board for England          1st Floor          Cottons Centre          Cottons Lane          London          SE1 2QL          Tel: 0845 078 8181</p>

## Appendix 2: ADVICE AND INFORMATION

### Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

ACAS operates a nationwide network of helplines which deal with queries about employment matters, including the rights and obligations arising out of employment law. The service is available to any individual or organisation free of charge. Any worker who contacts ACAS will wish to bear in mind the distinction between seeking information about the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, and the requirements attached to making a protected disclosure.

ACAS East Midlands Office

Lancaster House  
 10 Sherwood Rise  
 Nottingham  
 NG7 6JE  
 Tel: 0115 985 8253

General helpline numbers

08457 474747                      Monday-Friday 08:00-18:00  
 08456 061600 (for minicom users)    Monday-Friday 08:00-18:00