

The Canterbury Academy Trust

Schools for all the Talents



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WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Introduction

The staff and directors of The Canterbury Academy Trust seek to run all aspects of Academy Trust business and activity with full regard for high standards of conduct and integrity. In the event that members of the Canterbury Academy Trust staff, parents, Directors or The Academy' community at large become aware of activities which give cause for concern, the Canterbury Academy Trust has established the following whistleblowing policy which acts as a framework to allow concerns to be raised confidentially.

We encourage all of our staff to report any wrongdoing they are concerned about while working here. We consider whistleblowing a positive act that is in the interest of the Canterbury Academy Trust and all who work, study or visit here.

The purpose of this policy is to encourage people to speak out if they see something wrong and to assure everyone that they will be protected if they report any wrongdoing in good faith. We ask individuals to raise their concerns within the organisation in the first instance.

What is whistleblowing?

'Whistleblowing' means the reporting of suspected misconduct, fraud, illegal acts, abuse of people or resources, or failure to take necessary action against these by anyone at the Canterbury Academy Trust. A person is a whistleblower if s/he report certain types of wrongdoing which are in the public interest. This means it must have an effect on others e.g. other employees, pupils or the general public.

When might the Whistleblowing Policy apply?

The type of activity or behaviour that The Canterbury Academy Trust considers should be dealt with under this policy includes:

- Manipulation of accounting records and finances.
- Inappropriate use of the organisation's assets or funds.
- Decision-making for personal gain.
- Any criminal activity.
- Abuse of position.
- Fraud and deceit.
- Serious breaches of the Canterbury Academy Trust procedures that may advantage a particular party (for example tampering with tender documentation, failure to register a personal interest.).
- Inappropriate relationships between staff and students.
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others

Protection for a whistleblower

As a whistleblower, the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013 protects you if you are an employee. This means that the Canterbury Academy Trust assures you that you will not be treated unfairly or have your employment terminated because you “blew the whistle”. The specific measures put in place would be determined on a case by case basis. Whistleblowers who are not Canterbury Academy Trust employees are also assured that they will not be treated unfavourably as a result of their whistleblowing. By going beyond the minimum legal protection for employees only, the Canterbury Academy Trust offers the same level of protection to non-employees.

What Action Should the Whistleblower Take?

The Canterbury Academy Trust encourages the whistle-blower to raise the matter internally in the first instance to allow those staff and directors in positions of responsibility and authority to right the wrong and give an explanation for the behaviour or activity.

The Canterbury Academy Trust has designated a number of individuals to specifically deal with matters and the whistleblower is invited to decide which of these individuals would be the most appropriate person to deal with the matter. Should the matter of concern be about the Executive Principal or a member of the leadership team you may feel more comfortable contacting the Chair of the Board of Directors for him / her to investigate.

Name and Position:

Contact details:

Jon Watson, Executive Principal of the Trust

The Canterbury Academy

Dom Etheridge, HR Director

The Canterbury Academy

Mark Johnstone, Chair of the Board of Directors

c/o The Clerk based at The
Canterbury Academy

Tel: 01227 463971

All matters raised will be treated in strict confidence and anonymity will be respected wherever possible. The senior leadership team/Board of Directors will take steps to protect a whistleblower from any adverse reaction or reprisal.

Independent information and advice can be obtained from the charity “Public Concern at Work.” This charity offers free legal advice in certain circumstances to people concerned about serious malpractice at work. Its literature states that matters are handled in strict confidence and without obligation. Contact details for the Charity are as follows:

Public Concern at Work

<https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

Protect Advice Line: 020 3117 2520 (* option 1)

Business Support: 020 3117 2520 (*option 2)

Fax

020 7403 8823

Email

Protect Advice line: whistle@protect-advice.org.uk

Address

The Green House
244-254 Cambridge Heath Road
London E2 9DA

How will the matter be progressed?

Your report will be dealt with seriously and promptly. You will be kept informed of the action taken based on your report.

- The individual(s) in receipt of the information or allegation (the investigating officer/s) will carry out an investigation.
- The investigating officer(s), possibly in conjunction with the Board of Directors, will consider how best to report the findings and what corrective action needs to be taken. This may include some form of disciplinary action or third-party referral such as the police.
- The whistleblower will be informed of the results of the investigation and the action taken to address the matter.

Raising Unfounded Malicious Concerns

Individuals are encouraged to come forward in good faith with genuine concerns with the knowledge they will be taken seriously. If individuals raise malicious, unfounded concerns or attempt to make mischief, this will also be taken seriously and may constitute a disciplinary offence or require some form of penalty appropriate to the circumstances.