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Target group	All employees, consultants and volunteers
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**This policy applies to the whole of CfBT Schools Trust (CST), including all schools.**

## Policy: Whistleblowing

### Wrongdoing at work

This procedure is designed to deal with disclosure of information by an employee which relates to some danger, bribery, corruption, fraud or other unlawful or unethical conduct in the workplace. Employment legislation governs the making of disclosures concerning workplace activities and is intended to protect employees who blow the whistle on bad practice from being subjected to any detriment or from being unfairly dismissed as a result. This procedure is available to all employees who discover something they feel they should pass on. All types of wrongdoing are included whether they are acts committed by fellow employees, faults in school procedures or oversights which should be rectified. The procedure should be used even in the event that the act or omission causing you concern has finished or has not yet started.

More information can be found on <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

### Grievances

This procedure should not however be used where you have a complaint relating to your personal circumstances in the workplace. The Grievance Procedure contained in the Staff Discipline, Conduct and Grievance Policy [Staff Handbook] should be used in such cases.

### Detriment

Provided that this procedure is used correctly and you make the disclosure in good faith, you will not suffer any detriment as a result of reporting the wrongdoing. A failure to follow this procedure may, however, make the disclosure unreasonable and the protection given to you by this procedure may be lost.

### Stage one

#### Procedure

You should disclose the suspected wrongdoing first to **Head of School**. In the event that **Head of School** is involved in the suspected wrongdoing, you shall be entitled to proceed directly to Stage Two of this procedure.

#### Response

You can expect a response detailing to whom the disclosure has been notified or any action taken within seven days of **Head of School** becoming aware of the disclosure.

### Stage two

#### Procedure

If no response is forthcoming after seven days or if **Head of school** is involved in the suspected wrongdoing you shall be entitled to notify the **Executive Head, Karen Walker** as appropriate. An additional recommendation for each school is at **stage two** to formally advise their Local Governing Body and Regional Director of the issue.

The role of the Local Governing Body and Regional Director/ Director of Secondary Academies will be to ensure that the school responds robustly and appropriately to any whistleblowing concern.

If the concern regards the Headteacher then it should be raised directly with the Regional Director, by passing stage one

### Response

You can expect a response detailing any action taken within seven days of the **Head of School/ Executive Head**, Local Governing Body and Regional Director becoming aware of the disclosure.

### Stage three

#### Procedure

If no such response is forthcoming you should once more inform **Head of school, Executive Head**, Local Governing Body and Regional Director of the disclosure.

### Stage four

#### External body

If you do not receive a response within seven days, you are entitled to notify a relevant and appropriate body outside the school which may include:

- the Health and Safety Executive
- the Environment Agency
- the Information Commissioner
- the Department for Education
- the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform
- the Police
- the Charity Commission
- the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted).
- NSPCC.

### Bypassing the procedure

In extreme circumstances, you will have the right to raise your concern directly with a relevant and appropriate outside body without first having followed the stages above. This may, however, cause damage to the school and its reputation as well as constitute a breach of your own duty of confidentiality towards the school. This action should only be taken in extreme circumstances and after careful thought.

### Safeguarding

NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday, and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

More information can be found within the CST Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

### Extreme circumstances

The school will consider extreme circumstances exist where you have a reasonable belief that:

- The school will subject you to detriment if you inform [Head of school/ Executive head](#) in accordance with stage one above, or if you inform [Executive Head](#) and Local Governing Body and Regional Director in accordance with stage two or stage three.
- A cover-up is being mounted by the School; or
- A disclosure made previously to [Head of School](#) or the [Executive Head](#), Local Governing Body or Regional Director in accordance with the stages above has not prompted a satisfactory response.

### The media

Even where extreme circumstances are thought to exist, you should under no circumstances approach a commercial body or the media with details of the suspected wrongdoing. If you approach any such body and/or where your concern is disclosed for personal gain, the school may consider this to be gross misconduct and immediate disciplinary action may be taken against you.

### Queries

If you have any queries about this procedure, you should contact the [Head of School, Executive Head](#) or the Trust.