

Education Futures Trust

Whistleblowing Policy

Date of last review: May 2019
Date of review: June 2023
Date of next review: June 2027
Contact: Chief Executive, Education Futures Trust

Our children. Our families. Our community.

Registered Charity Number: 114617 Company Number: 7852922
Patron: Baroness Stedman Scott OBE

Introduction

The Trust is committed to the highest standards of openness and expects employees to come forward and voice serious concerns. This policy covers major concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures and allows individuals to make disclosures where they have seen wrongdoing taking place.

Please also refer to the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy for employees which make reference to other important policies that need to be read in conjunction with the Whistleblowing Policy.

All concerns will be treated in confidence and your identity will not be revealed without your prior agreement and you will not be penalised for making a disclosure.

1. Who does this policy apply to?

- 1.1 This policy applies to Education Futures Trust (Trust) trustees, employees and volunteers.
- 1.2 In addition, the policy applies to all contractors and their staff working for the Trust.

2. What is the purpose of this policy?

- 2.1 This policy aims to:
 - encourage you to feel confident to make a disclosure of concerns about issues that fall under this ;
 - provide avenues for you to raise those concerns;
 - reassure you that you will be protected from being penalised or suffering detriment.

3. What kind of concerns would I disclose under this policy?

- 3.1 This policy covers any serious concerns about service provision or the conduct of anyone acting on behalf of the Trust.
- 3.2 Concerns that fall within this policy could include:
 - a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed;
 - a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligations;
 - disclosures relating to miscarriages of justice;
 - damage to the environment;
 - Health and Safety risks, including risks to the public;
 - information relating to any of the above categories is being or is

likely to be deliberately concealed.

- 3.3 Please note that the Complaints Policy exists to enable a complaint to be lodged and that the Grievance Policy exists for matters concerning your own employment that you are unhappy about. It is very important that this policy is not used to raise individual grievances, and nor is it to be a mechanism for challenging decisions, practices and policies with which you disagree.

4. Can I remain anonymous?

You are encouraged to put your name to allegations as anonymous concerns are much less powerful, and it may significantly help the investigation if you don't remain anonymous. However, these allegations will still be considered by the Trust. The Trust will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take appropriate action to protect individuals.

5. How do I raise a concern and make a disclosure?

- 5.1 Concerns can be raised either orally or in writing, to either your immediate line manager or a more senior manager. In cases where your concerns are about the Chief Executive you should approach the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- 5.2 You will be expected to give as much background and history as you can and, whilst you are not expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of an allegation, it is in your best interests to demonstrate that you are making the disclosure in good faith and that you reasonably believe that the information disclosed, and any allegation contained within it, are substantially true.

6. How will the Trust respond?

- 6.1 In order to protect all individuals concerned with any disclosure, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate. Where appropriate the matters raised may be:
- resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation;
 - investigated by management or through disciplinary procedures;
 - be referred to the police, and or, other appropriate agencies.
- 6.2 Within 10 working days the Trust will:
- acknowledge receipt of your concern
 - indicate how it is proposed to deal with the matter and give an estimate of how long this will take.
- 6.3 Should there be a need for investigating officers to meet with

you, this can be off site if you wish and you can be accompanied by a trade union representative who can support and advise you. All parties will be expected to maintain strict confidentiality.

- 6.4 The Trust will take steps to minimise any difficulties which you may experience as a result of raising a concern.
- 6.5 Whilst the Trust must act in confidence in relation to any disclosure made under this Policy, it will use its best endeavours to inform you of the outcome of any investigation wherever possible.

7. Malicious claims & ulterior motives

There may be occasions when a concern is raised either with an ulterior motive or maliciously. If it is found that the individual has maliciously raised a concern that they know is untrue, disciplinary proceedings may be commenced against that individual.