



THE
**CREATIVE
LEARNING**
PARTNERSHIP TRUST

Whistleblowing Policy

Responsible Committee	Full Trust Board
Date Approved by Committee	17 th December 2025
Implementation Date	17 th December 2025
Next Review Date	Autumn Term 2027
Policy Owner	Laura Austen, COO

This Policy has been created in accordance and to support the Mission, Values and Beliefs of The Creative Learning Partnership Trust.

Our Mission.

Creating transformational educative opportunities; promoting social justice; unlocking individual freedom.



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Our Beliefs.

Our beliefs are what we value, they're what we passionately talk about.

Creativity.
What we mean: Innovative problem solvers, use our knowledge and skills to turn ideas into reality.
What we don't mean: Head in the clouds, waste time in wrong areas, not commercially aware

Learning.
What we mean: Knowledge rich curriculum, nurture skills and talent, everyone can reach potential.
What we don't mean: Everyone achieves the same standard, choices are removed.

Partnership.
What we mean: Collaborate openly with others, willingly offer advice, happily request support.
What we don't mean: Create knowledge silos, freely disclose sensitive information.

Trust.
What we mean: Foster strong relationships, can count on others, have confident expectations.
What we don't mean: Passing the buck, become complacent, rely too heavily on others.

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Our Personality.

Our personality expresses who we are, it's how we talk, act and behave.

Kindness.
What we mean: Act with compassion, always thinking of others, being a good human.
What we don't mean: Ignore consequences, brush things under the carpet, don't tackle issues.

Understanding.
What we mean: Listening and valuing one another, have empathy and able to feel what others feel.
What we don't mean: Take on other people's problems, preoccupied with concerns.

Collaboration.
What we mean: Working together, enabling each other to develop positive outcomes.
What we don't mean: Unfocused meetings or inefficient use of other people's time.

Innovation.
What we mean: Using expertise and research to transform, always striving to improve.
What we don't mean: Improving one area to the detriment of others or ignoring core ideals.

Integrity.
What we mean: Courage to do the right thing, taking time to care, education first.
What we don't mean: Compromise professionalism or being unprofessional.

Dedication.
What we mean: Committed to supporting and improving, work smart to make it happen, resourceful.
What we don't mean: Working all hours, do everything yourself, neglect health and well-being.

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Whistleblowing Policy

The Creative Learning Partnership Trust is committed to operating with honesty and integrity. We expect all colleagues to operate on this basis and to adhere to our policies, procedures and code of conduct. Fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing will not be tolerated.

The aim of this policy is to encourage colleagues to report suspected wrongdoing internally rather than externally as a first resort. Any concerns raised under this policy will be treated seriously and dealt with confidentially. The concern may relate to something that is happening or has happened in the past.

Any colleague raising a concern under this policy will not be treated less favourably for raising concerns as outlined in this procedure. This means that any colleague who raises a concern under this policy will not be subjected to a detriment, nor will they be dismissed for doing so.

Any reference to 'the Trust' refers to the Creative Learning Partnership Trust. This policy applies to employees of The Creative Learning Partnership Trust, referred to in this policy as colleagues including agency workers, trainees or anyone working on a casual basis.

The policy and procedure applies to all colleagues, regardless of length of service, but does not form part of the contract of employment and can be varied from time to time.

What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is when a worker reports suspected wrongdoing at work.

For example

- A criminal offence; and/or
- A miscarriage of justice; and/or
- Damage to the environment; and/or
- Breach of a legal obligation; and/or
- A danger to health and safety; and/or
- A deliberate concealment of any of the above.

A colleague can report things that are not right, are illegal or if anyone at work is neglecting their duties, including:

- someone's health and safety is in danger
- damage to the environment
- a criminal offence
- the company isn't obeying the law (like not having the right insurance)
- covering up wrongdoing

A colleague who has a reasonable belief that a wrongdoing has or may be committed and raises a genuine concern relating to any of the above, is a whistleblower and is protected under this policy.

The Trust will, at its discretion, consider disclosures that are made anonymously, although such disclosures are inevitably much less powerful. The Trust will also treat every disclosure in confidence, and only reveal the identity of the person making it if absolutely necessary (e.g. if required in connection with legal action).

Rights of the Whistleblower

All colleagues are encouraged to use this policy to raise genuine concerns and will not be treated less favourably for doing so, even if they are mistaken in their belief.

Any colleague who raises a concern under this policy will not be subjected to a detriment nor will they be dismissed for doing so. Any colleague who believes that they have been subjected to a detriment for raising a complaint should raise the matter with the named Monitoring Officer, who is the Director of Operations – Laura Austen

Any colleagues raising the concern are protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) which protects the public interest by providing a remedy for individuals who suffer workplace reprisal for raising a genuine concern, whether it is a concern about child safeguarding and welfare systems, financial malpractice, danger, illegality or other wrongdoing.

Victimisation of a whistleblower by any other colleague for raising a concern under this policy will in itself constitute a disciplinary offence.

Where the Trust believes that a colleague has knowingly made a false allegation or acted maliciously, the colleague will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include dismissal for gross misconduct.

This policy does not deal with any complaints relating to a colleague's own treatment at work or own contract of employment. Those matters should be raised under the Grievance procedure or the Bullying and Harassment procedure, as appropriate. An exception to this will be when the matter of concern arises from the colleague's own treatment at work that is arising from the whistleblowing matter they have raised previously.

Making a Whistleblowing Complaint

To make a whistleblowing complaint the whistleblower has to meet certain conditions.

If the disclosure is made to the Trust, it must be in the public interest and the person making the complaint ("the whistleblower") has a reasonable suspicion that the alleged malpractice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.

If the disclosure is made to a regulatory body then as well as satisfying the conditions required for disclosure to the Trust, the whistleblower must also honestly and reasonably believe that the information they provide and any allegations contained in it are substantially true.

For example, a colleague will be eligible for protection if:

- they honestly think what they are reporting is true
- they think they are telling the right person
- they believe that their disclosure is in the public interest.

If the disclosure is made to other external bodies then as well as satisfying the conditions required for the Trust, in all circumstances of the case it must be reasonable for them to make the complaint. Further the whistleblower must:

- reasonably believe that they would be victimised if they raised the matter internally or to a regulatory body or,
- reasonably believe that evidence is likely to be concealed or destroyed or,
- have already raised the concern with the Trust and/or relevant regulatory body and no appropriate action has been taken
- reasonably believe that the information they provide and any allegations contained therein are substantially true.

If the disclosure is made to other external bodies and is of an "exceptionally serious" nature – which in an education setting could include, say, the alleged abuse of children or corruption then the whistleblower will not be required to:

- have raised the matter concerned internally first
- believe that they will be subject to a detriment for raising the disclosure externally
- believe that the evidence is likely to be concealed or destroyed.

A colleague who wants to raise a wrongdoing should in the first instance inform any one of the Contact Officers initially the school headteachers, details of whom can be found below. If a concern relates to a headteacher then the CEO needs to be informed- details below. If a concern relates to the CEO then the chair of trustees is informed- details below.

The initial contact can be by telephone (***please see telephone numbers below***) or in writing and, if the latter, should be in a sealed envelope addressed to the officer concerned and marked: 'PIDA – Strictly Private and Confidential'. E-mail cannot be guaranteed as a secure medium and it is not recommended as a channel for reporting issues related to this policy.

The Contact Officer who has received a disclosure will:

- acknowledge its receipt, in writing, within 5 working days;
- seek further information if required, which may include a personal interview, at which the colleague (whistleblower) can be accompanied by a representative of their trade union or professional association, or by a fellow employee;
- when the precise nature of the alleged wrongdoing is established, refer the disclosure to the monitoring officer);
- in liaison with the Monitoring Officer keep the individual informed regarding the progress and in all cases (subject to legal constraints) provide details of the outcome of any investigation.

On receipt of a disclosure from a Contact Officer, the Monitoring Officer will determine what further action, if any, is needed, which may comprise:

- internal investigation
- report to the Police
- report to external audit
- independent enquiry
- any combination of the above

The Monitoring Officer will also ensure that the Contact Officer is advised of progress and outcome.

If the colleague does not reasonably believe that appropriate action has been taken in relation to their concern, then they may raise it externally to the prescribed regulator or our external auditors. The charity, Public Concern at Work, can advise the colleague about raising the concern externally. This will include advising who the appropriate prescribed regulator is. The website for Public Concern at Work is <http://www.pcaaw.co.uk/>

Safeguarding Concerns

If a colleague has concerns about child protection or safeguarding, these should be raised immediately through the Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures. Whistleblowing Policy Safeguarding concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in your school or, if the concern relates to the DSL, to the CEO or Chair of Trustees.

The whistleblowing policy should only be used for safeguarding concerns if:

- You believe the safeguarding concern has not been dealt with appropriately through normal safeguarding channels
- You believe there is a systemic failure in the Trust's safeguarding procedures
- You believe evidence relating to safeguarding is being concealed or destroyed

For urgent safeguarding concerns, you can also contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline on **0800 028 0285** or email help@nspcc.org.uk

Record Keeping and Data Protection

All whistleblowing concerns will be recorded and retained in accordance with the Trust's data protection obligations and retention schedule. Records will include:

- The nature of the concern raised
- How the concern was investigated
- The outcome of any investigation
- Actions taken as a result

Records will be kept securely and confidentially. Access will be restricted to those involved in handling the concern. Personal data will be processed in line with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

The identity of the whistleblower will only be disclosed if:

- The whistleblower gives their explicit consent
- It is required by law or court order
- It is essential for the proper investigation of the concern

Support for Whistleblowers

The Trust recognises that raising a whistleblowing concern can be stressful. We are committed to supporting colleagues who raise genuine concerns in good faith.

Support available includes:

- **Confidential discussions** with the Contact Officer or Monitoring Officer about your concern and the process
- **Trade union or professional association support** - you have the right to be accompanied by a union representative or colleague at any meetings
- **Occupational health support** - if raising a concern is affecting your wellbeing, you can request a referral to occupational health
- **Regular updates** - the Contact Officer will keep you informed of progress, subject to confidentiality constraints
- **Protection from detriment** - any colleague who subjects you to detriment for whistleblowing will face disciplinary action

If you feel you are being treated unfairly as a result of raising a concern, you should report this immediately to the Monitoring Officer (Laura Austen, Chief Operating Officer).

External Auditor:

Crowe UK
Black Country House, Rounds Green Road,
Oldbury, West Midlands,
B69 2DG
+44 (0)121 543 1900

Levels of Authority

Throughout this policy document, there are many references to Contact Officer. For the purposes of this policy 'Contact Officer' is the person delegated by the Trustees to perform the task. The Contact Officers are listed below - initially the Headteachers, then the CEO and Chair of Trustees:

Headteachers within each school

James Bateman Middle School - Tracy Price - 01782 973900

Thursfield Primary School - Liz Bradbury - 01782 512301

Hempstalls Primary School - Amy Bell - 01782 950082

Manor Hill First School – Lindsay Harris - 01785 812418

Parkside Primary School – Sophia Jones - 01785 450145

Greenhall - Jo Di Castiglione – 01785 246159

Langdale Primary School – Nicola Cartwright – 01782 948000

Green Lea First School– Lindsay Harris – 01889 505309

Doxey Academy – Laura Lazenby – 01785 450120

Beaconfields Primary School – Rebecca Bell – 01785 785699

Burleyfields Primary School – Rebecca Bell – 01785 812418

CEO

Mr Sam Compton (Chief Executive Officer and Accounting Officer of CLPT)
01782 228912

Chair of Trustees

Peter Ford – 01782 228912

Monitoring Officer

Laura Austen – Chief Operating Officer - 01782 228912