

# Whistleblowing Policy

|                            |                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Responsible Committee      | Full Trust Board  |
| Date Approved by Committee | July 2026         |
| Implementation Date        | July 2026         |
| Next Review Date           | Summer Term 2027  |
| Policy Owner               | Laura Austen, COO |

This document has been created to support the mission, values and beliefs of the Creative Learning Partnership Trust:

## Our mission.

Creating  
**transformational**  
educative opportunities;  
promoting **social justice**;



## Our values.

### Integrity

Courage to do the right thing, taking time to care.

*Speaking and acting truthfully, fairly and upholding universal, moral principles.*



### Collaboration.

Working together, enabling each other.

*Working with others to achieve strategic direction and to develop mutual trust and respect.*



### Dedication.

Committed to supporting and improving.

*Showing commitment to and responsibility for strategies and goals.*



### Kindness.

Thinking of others and acting with compassion.

*Demonstrating intentional actions to show care, respect and empathy to others.*



### Innovation.

Using expertise and research to transform.

*Taking a proactive approach to problem solving, showing creativity, forward thinking and adaptability.*



### Understanding.

Openness, listening and valuing one another.

*Actively listening to others to gauge the perspectives and needs of others within relevant context.*



# C

### CREATIVE.

**Creativity** is at the heart of how we achieve exceptional educational outcomes. It drives innovation and empowers us to transform new and original ideas into reality, enriching the learning experience for every child.

# L

### LEARNING.

**Learning** is at the core of all we do. We are relentless in our commitment to ensuring that every child within our care achieves outcomes that truly reflect their potential and aspirations.

# P

### PARTNERSHIP.

Collaboration and **partnership** are key to continuous improvement. By working together, we create an inclusive, supportive, and responsive organisation that listens and learns from all voices.

# T

### TRUST.

**Trust** is the foundation of our culture. It permeates every aspect of our schools and organisation, creating confidence, integrity, and building strong relationships across our entire community.

# 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.

## **1.Purpose**

The aim of this policy is to encourage and enable you to feel confident in raising concerns and to question and act upon concerns. It provides you with a clear avenue to raise concerns and sets out how we will deal with them and communicate with you.

It aims to ensure everyone feels able to raise any genuine concern in the knowledge that it will be taken seriously, and that they will be protected from repercussions. Those working for or on behalf of the council must not treat individuals detrimentally because they have made a qualifying disclosure (i.e. blow the whistle) under the Employee Rights Act 1996, including Public Disclosure Act 1998.

## **2.Scope**

This policy applies to all employees and workers employed by us including contractors, subcontractors, and agency workers. Other individuals, including our volunteers, suppliers and those genuinely self-employed are also encouraged to follow the procedure set out in this policy.

This policy has been implemented following consultation with our recognised Trade Unions.

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or contract to provide services, and we may amend it at any time in consultation with recognised trade unions.

Where a colleague has a concern with their own treatment at work or in relation to their contract of employment, it is usually appropriate that they raise it under either the Resolving Grievance Policy or Anti-Harassment & Bullying Policy. We will however consider if there are any exceptional circumstances in which we feel it appropriate to deal with it under the terms of this policy. Concerns relating to sexual harassment may be raised under this policy, where there is a public interest in disclosure or a failure of the organisation to address such issues. If you are unsure about whether your concerns are best dealt with under the Whistleblowing Policy or another policy, please contact your Headteacher/Manager, in the first instance, for further advice.

Decisions will be made in line with the Trust's local scheme of delegation or equivalent mechanism for making decisions at the appropriate level.

## **3. What is whistleblowing?**

Whistleblowing is when you report certain types of wrongdoing which relate to risk or malpractice. This could well be something you've seen at work – though not always. The wrongdoing you disclose is often seen as something which is in the 'public interest'.

The following are the types of complaints that count as whistleblowing:

- A criminal offence, and/or
- A miscarriage of justice: and/or
- Risk or actual damage to the environment; and/or
- A failure to comply with a legal obligation; and/or
- A risk to the health and safety of an individual; and/or
- Sexual harassment, or a failure to prevent or address sexual harassment in the workplace, and/or
- You believe someone is covering up any of the above

#### **4. Rights and Protection of the Whistle-blower**

Your Trust aims to encourage openness and will support you if you raise genuine concerns under this Policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

In turn, to be protected by whistleblowing laws against detrimental treatment or dismissal, you must reasonably believe that the wrongdoing (as outlined above) is being, has been, or is likely to be committed and that your 'disclosure' is in the public interest. Examples of detrimental treatment include dismissal, disciplinary action, threats or other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern.

If you believe that you have been subjected to a detriment for raising such a complaint you should raise the matter with the Headteacher. If you believe that the Headteacher has subjected you to a detriment you should raise the matter to the Chief Executive Officer or Chair of Trustees.

Victimisation of a whistle-blower by any other colleague, for raising a concern under this policy will constitute a disciplinary offence.

False allegations raised maliciously may lead to disciplinary action or a referral made to any relevant regulatory body if you are not an employee.

We will take all reasonable steps to minimise any difficulties that you may experience as a result of raising a concern. For instance, if you are asked to give evidence in a criminal or disciplinary proceedings, we will arrange for you to receive appropriate advice and support.

#### **5. The process**

##### **Step 1**

Raising a Whistleblowing concern

As soon as you become reasonably concerned, we hope you feel able to raise it. The earlier you raise your concern, the easier it is to take action.

You should raise your concern in the first instance, at any time, with the nominated member of staff (e.g. your Headteacher) who is appointed as a contact for Whistleblowing concerns. You school details are as follows:

**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

If the whistleblowing concerns involve the nominated member of staff you should raise your concern directly to the CEO.

If your whistleblowing concerns relate to the Headteacher, your concerns should be directed to the CEO.

It could be something that has happened, is happening now or you believe will happen in the near future.

You can raise your concern verbally, or in writing. If you are emailing, particularly using an external email (i.e. your personal email) we strongly recommend that you secure the email by password protection with encryption and share the password by alternate method.

We recommend that you use our form to raise a whistleblowing concern. This will help you provide us with the information that we need to properly look at the concerns. Take care to ensure the accuracy of the information.

It is important that you set out clearly:

- What the concern is and to whom it relates
- The background and history of the concern – giving relevant dates and any evidence you may have
- The reason you are particularly concerned about the situation and why you believe the information to be true.
- You are encouraged to put your name on any concern you raise as it makes it easier for the school or council to investigate it.

If you have difficulty at any stage of this procedure either

- Because of a disability or
- Because English is not your first language

You should discuss the situation with the nominated member of staff or governor as soon as possible, so that suitable support can be explored.

## **Step 2 Responding to your whistleblowing concern**

On receipt of your ‘disclosure’ or concern, the nominated member of staff will acknowledge its receipt, in writing to you, ideally within 5 working days. They will also seek advice and support via their HR or Legal Provider.

In some cases, they may need to ask you to attend a meeting to clarify the nature of your concern. This will be arranged as soon as possible. You may, if you wish, bring a colleague or a trade union representative with you to the meeting.

Where it is not possible to hold a face-to-face meeting, we may conduct the process remotely, for example using Microsoft Teams. We will ensure that you have access to the necessary technology for participating.

The nominated member of staff or governor will decide if an investigation is required or any other appropriate actions. For example, refer to another policy, our auditors etc.

The level of investigation and time this will take will vary depending on the nature of the suspected wrongdoing hence it is not possible to lay down precise timescales. However, at the outset of this process you and the nominated member of staff or governor will agree how and when communication will take place so that you are kept updated on progress.

Following the investigation, a report will be produced outlining findings, for the nominated member of staff or governor to decide any appropriate next steps, including whether it is appropriate to commence a disciplinary process.

They will endeavour to inform you of the outcome of our enquiries and/or investigations, however, given confidentiality and other relevant aspects and legal constraints, it may not be possible to share details of the outcome and any action taken.

### **Step 3 If you are dissatisfied with the outcome**

The Trust hope that you will be satisfied with the way your concerns are treated and any investigations that may be carried out.

However, if you are not, and you feel it is right to take the matter externally, i.e. outside the Trust, please find below a list of possible contacts. If you tell a prescribed person or body, it must be one that deals with the issue you are raising.

- A list of external regulatory organisations, such as the Secretary of State for Education or relevant professional bodies can be found at the following government website. Whistleblowing: list of prescribed people and bodies - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- A disclosure about child protection and safeguarding concern can be raised directly with the local authority LADO, if not already raised. Similarly, if the matter relates to fraud you can raise it directly to the local authority's Fraud Team.
- The charity, Protect, can advise you about raising the concern externally. This will include advising who the appropriate prescribed regulator is.

We always encourage you to raise your whistleblowing concerns internally in the first instance. However, the law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body. It will very rarely, if ever, be appropriate to alert the media and as such you will not have protection under whistleblowing laws if you choose to make contact with the media unless certain conditions are met.

We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. If you would like independent advice at any stage, you can contact the independent charity Protect. They should be able to give you free and confidential advice about how to raise a concern about serious malpractice at work. If you are a trade union member, your union may also be able to provide you with appropriate advice.

## **6. Confidentiality and Anonymity**

We hope that you to feel able to raise a whistleblowing concern openly under this policy.

Where you raise a whistleblowing concern openly, we will maintain your confidentiality as far as possible. If we need to identify your identity to anyone, we will notify you beforehand and we will discuss with you whether and how we can proceed.

As an alternative, you may decide to raise a whistleblowing concern anonymously. We encourage anonymous reporting over remaining silent. Although we will investigate any concern that is reported anonymously, as best we can, an anonymous report is likely to be more difficult for us to investigate and we will not be in a position to provide you with any feedback. We will consider the seriousness of the issues raised, the credibility of the concern and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

## **7. Wellbeing and Support**

Supporting wellbeing is an integral and essential part of our People Policies. We recognise that whistleblowing processes can be stressful for everyone involved. We all respond to stressful situations in different ways. Sometimes a process may cause distress and impact on both physical and mental health.

We provide access to wellbeing support through our wellbeing offer or we can refer you to occupational health. If you visit the Trusts SharePoint, you can find access to wellbeing support. This contains information and resources and provides ideas and solutions to help support your own wellbeing as well as providing advice for your school management

More general wellbeing advice and information can be found at MIND and Mental Health Foundation.

## **8. Data Protection and Confidentiality**

Our aim is to deal with whistleblowing matters sensitively and with due respect for the privacy of any individuals involved. All employees must treat as confidential any information communicated to them in connection with such a complaint. Breach of confidentiality may give rise to disciplinary action.

If you are invited to a formal meeting, you must not make any electronic recordings. An exception to this may be where it has been agreed by all parties as a reasonable adjustment related to a disability. Any breach of this provision may lead to disciplinary action, which could include dismissal or referral to any relevant regulatory body.

We process personal data collected during whistleblowing complaints/investigations in accordance with the Trusts privacy notice and data protection policy.

## **9. Related Policies**

This policy is part of a suite of people policies and other related policies that you may wish to read are as set out below:

- Resolving Grievances Policy
- Appeals Procedure
- Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Disciplinary Policy

## **10. Further Advice**

If you need any further information about any aspect of this policy, please initially speak to your nominated member of staff or governor for whistleblowing concerns. Or to the Monitoring Officer (Laura Austen, Chief Operating Officer).

## **11. Key Contacts**

### **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

### **External Auditor:**

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

Staffordshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 0300 111 8007 or use the online enquiry form at the following website.

Website details: [www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Care-for-children-andfamilies/Childprotection/rc-Professional.aspx](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Care-for-children-andfamilies/Childprotection/rc-Professional.aspx)

Protect Charity: Protect - Speak up stop harm - Protect - Speak up stop harm ([protect-advice.org.uk](http://protect-advice.org.uk))

Protect Advice line: 0203 117 2520

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).

This form is intended for use by any individual working for The Creative Learning Partnership Trust (including contractors, workers and volunteers) who want to raise a concern about wrongdoing.

This form should be used to report wrongdoing within the Trust that you believe is in the public interest.

If your concern relates to a personal complaint that is not in the public interest (for example, an allegation of bullying or harassment, or that your contract of employment has been breached), you should raise it under our separate policies, such as Anti-Harassment and Bullying and Resolving Grievances. If you are unsure about whether your concerns are best dealt with under the Whistleblowing or Resolving Grievance Policy, please speak to:- your Headteacher or Laura Austen the Monitoring Officer

Insert Click or tap here to enter text.

contact details for schools nominated member of staff or Monitoring Officer for further advice.

On completion, please send the form to:-

Insert Click or tap here to enter text. Who are the first points of contact for any Whistleblowing complaints.

Please note an exception to this is where your whistleblowing complaint relates to member of staff that is your schools nominated person in which case the complaint should be addressed to the CEO.

Complaints can be submitted either via an envelope marked "confidential" or sent as an email attachment with "confidential" in the subject line. If you are sending via a personal email you are strongly advised to secure your email by password protection with encryption, providing a password via an alternate method.

Once you have submitted this form, we will invoke the procedure set out in our Whistleblowing Policy and may contact you to clarify the nature of your concerns.

#### Formal whistleblowing concern

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>Name:</b>      |  |
| <b>Job Title:</b> |  |
| <b>School:</b>    |  |
| <b>Date:</b>      |  |