

AA Teamworks SCITT

Whistleblowing Policy **2024-2025**

Written by	Hollie Lawless
Adopted by	SCITT Board
Monitoring responsibility	SCITT Board
Date	September 2024
This review date	September 2024
Next review date	September 2025

Aims

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Great Heights Academy Trust Whistleblowing Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy

This policy reflects the Trust's commitment to good practices, valuing staff and seeking continuous improvement in service delivery. The "Whistleblowing" policy provides a mechanism whereby employees can express any concerns they may have about a colleague or a Service, without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. The policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise concerns within the Trust rather than overlooking these concerns or "blowing the whistle".

Employees can sometimes have concerns about colleagues or about an Academy Service, but they may not feel able to express those concerns, because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the Trust. Employees are encouraged to use the procedure set out in the Whistleblowing Policy to raise concerns within the Trust and to receive feedback on any action taken.

If your concern relates to an incident within your placement setting then you should follow the procedure of the whistleblowing policy of the placement school. If the concern relates to the SCITT, this policy should be followed.

Whistleblowing Definition

Concerns to be reported under this policy may relate to something which involves an issue in the public interest and which you have reasonable belief to be true.

This may include:

- Criminal activity
- Miscarriages of justice;
- Danger to health and safety;
- Damage to the environment;
- Failure to comply with any legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements;
- Bribery;
- Financial fraud or mismanagement;
- Negligence;
- Breach of SCITT internal policies and procedures;
- Conduct likely to damage the SCITT reputation;
- Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information;
- Concerns about the harm or risk of harm to children;
- The deliberate concealment of any of the above matter

Procedure

Any issue raised will be kept confidential while the procedure is being used.

The issue should raise the matter in written form marked private and confidential and addressed to the Head of SCITT. Alternatively, if the matter is too serious or sensitive in nature to raise internally, the matter should be directed to the Chair of Governors of the Trust Board.

An investigation will be carried out to establish the facts of the matter and assess whether the concern has foundation and be resolved internally. The initial assessment may identify the need to involve third parties to provide further information or advice, e.g. trust staff or the Department for Education.

Records will be kept of work undertaken and actions taken throughout the investigator. The investigating officer 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.

Subject to legal restraints, the whistle-blower will be informed of the results of the investigation and the action taken to address the matter. Depending on the nature of the concern or allegation and whether or not it has been substantiated, the matter will be reported to the Trust Governing Body/Board.

The identity of any individual raising a whistleblowing concern will be protected whenever possible. The investigation process may, however, unavoidably reveal the source of the information and a statement may be required as part of the mechanism by which relevant evidence is gathered, and if the whistle-blower does not wish their identity to be disclosed this could make it difficult to proceed further with the matter.

Anonymous allegations may be given consideration by the SCITT/Trust (and this will always be the case when they are deemed to be of a serious nature) but such allegations carry less weight than those which are attributable to a named individual and are often significantly more difficult to investigate effectively. Consequently, issues raised anonymously are, inevitably, less likely to prove capable of full exploration.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and will be promoted and implemented throughout the SCITT team, including trainees.

Appendix 1: Report form to be used for Public Interest Disclosure

Name of student making report: <i>(whistleblowers are encouraged to provide an indication of their identity although this is not compulsory)</i>	
Persons reported:	
Concerns reported Provide full details of the background to the concern including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • names, dates, and places • reasons why you are concerned <i>(attach separate sheet if necessary)</i>	
Date:	
Signed: (if name appears above)	

Please send this completed form to the Head of SCITT – h.lawless@greathightstrust.org.uk. Alternatively, if the matter is too serious or sensitive in nature to raise internally, the matter should be directed to the Chair of Governors of the Trust Board.