

We are an **ambitious** and **inclusive** Trust of schools
strengthening communities through excellent education.



Whistleblowing Policy

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1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 We are an ambitious and inclusive Trust of schools strengthening our communities through excellent education. We are committed to providing excellent education for every child, every day, and aim to strengthen and work with our communities.
- 1.2 The Ted Wragg Trust is committed to doing things right with the highest possible standards of openness and accountability. In line with that commitment, it encourages employees and others with serious concerns about any aspect of the Trust or schools within the Trust to voice those concerns.

2.0 Definition

- 2.1 For the purpose of this document the Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust is referred to as **the Ted Wragg Trust or TWT or the Trust**

3.0 Legal Framework

- 3.1 This policy is introduced in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 to protect those who report irregularities or wrongdoing in the work place. The policy set out in this document applies those statutory provisions to the Trust.

4.0 Scope and purpose

- 4.1 This policy allows employees to raise qualifying concerns. Qualifying concerns must be of public interest relating to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work. If an employee raises a genuine qualifying concern they will automatically get protected in law. This policy describes what qualifying concerns are and the support the Trust will provide to protect an employee who raises them.
- 4.2 This policy is not an alternative to our grievance or complaints policies and should not be used for complaints or concerns relating to your own personal circumstances. To understand which policy to use, please see [Appendix A](#).

5.0 What are qualifying concerns?

- 5.1 Qualifying concerns raised under this policy can include:
 - An unlawful or a criminal offence;
 - A breach of legal obligation (but not a personal contractual breach unless such a breach involves a matter of public interest)
 - A miscarriage of justice
 - Mistreatment or abuse of a pupil/student or a member of the public for whom the school has a responsibility
 - Disregarding Health and Safety at work legislation
 - Seeking undue favour over a contractual matter or a job application
 - Actions which have led to or could lead to a damage to the environment
 - Deliberately concealing evidence of any of the above
- 5.2 If your concerns are in relation to the safeguarding and welfare of students you must also raise this matter in accordance with the school or Trust's normal processes for reporting safeguarding concerns.

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6.0 Protection and support

- 6.1 It is understandable that employees may be worried about raising a qualifying concern and the potential for repercussions. We encourage our staff to raise anything they are concerned about under this policy and will support staff who raise genuine concerns, even if they turn out to be mistaken.
- 6.2 All staff who raise a concern under this policy will be offered a 'link person' who will support them during the process and keep them updated on progress.
- 6.3 The Trust will take all reasonable steps to ensure that staff are protected and do not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a genuine concern under this policy. Detrimental treatment could include unfavourable treatment, disciplinary action or other threats. If you believe you have suffered unfavourable treatment you should contact either your link person, Headteacher, member of the Senior Executive Team or the Trustee who is Chair of the Audit and Risk committee. Alternatively, you can email whistleblowing@tedwraggtrust.co.uk
- 6.4 Staff must not treat anyone raising a qualifying concern unfavourably. Any member of staff involved in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action.

7.0 How to raise a concern

- 7.1 We hope you will be able to raise any concerns you have with your manager. You can do this verbally or in writing and this is often the quickest way of resolving concerns.
- 7.2 If this isn't possible, or the matter is more serious, concerns can be raised with either your Headteacher, a member of the Senior Executive Team or the Trustee who is Chair of the Audit and Risk committee. Alternatively, you may wish to email your concerns to: whistleblowing@tedwraggtrust.co.uk
- 7.3 If you are a member of a Trade Union you may find it supportive to contact them too.
- 7.4 In certain circumstances you may wish to report your concerns externally to one of the bodies listed on the '[List of prescribed persons and bodies](#)' such as a regulator, Ofsted or the DFE.
- 7.5 Where the concern relates to a child protection matter and you do not wish to raise it via the school or Trust, you may inform:
Devon: LADO childsc.localauthoritydesignatedofficersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk or on 01392 384964
Plymouth: LADO LADO@plymouth.gov.uk or on 01752 304769.

8.0 What happens when I raise a concern

- 8.1 We will arrange a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss your concerns. You can be accompanied by a colleague or Trade Union representative to this meeting.
- 8.2 The meeting will be confidential and all parties must respect this.
- 8.3 We will take down a written summary of your concerns and will aim to give you an indication, if possible, of how we propose to deal with the concern.
- 8.4 We hope that all our employees feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. However, if you do wish to raise them confidentially we will make every effort to keep your identity secret. It will be necessary however for anyone investigating your concern to know your identity and we will discuss this with you when your concern is raised.
- 8.5 A central record of all whistleblowing complaints will be collated which will comply with data protection requirements.

9.0 Anonymous concerns

- 9.1 Concerns raised anonymously can be much more difficult to investigate as it may not be possible to obtain further information about the concern and establish whether the allegations are credible. Whistleblowers are

encouraged to come forward with any qualifying concerns and protections and support will be put in place in for them.

9.2 Where we do receive anonymous complaints, we will determine whether to investigate based on:

- The seriousness of the issue
- Credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of being able to confirm the concern from other sources.

10.0 Investigations and outcomes

10.1 Once a concern has been raised we will conduct an initial assessment to determine the scope of any investigation. You may be required to attend further meetings, with support, in order to provide further information.

10.2 In some cases, an investigation may be necessary. A senior leader will be appointed to the responsible person for managing the whistleblowing concern. The investigation will be conducted by a Trust employee who has specialist knowledge in the area of the concern. An investigation report will be sent to the Senior Leader responsible. The report will make recommendations for next steps which may include conducting further investigations, undertaking an investigation under another Trust policy or making changes to Trust processes to mitigate the risk of any further wrongdoing.

10.3 We will always try and deal with any concerns raised under this policy fairly and appropriately. If you are not happy with the way in which your concern has been dealt with you can contact a member of the Trust Senior Executive team, the Chair of Trustees or the Trust's external auditors (contact details can be obtained from the Clerk to Trustees clerk@tedwraggtrust.co.uk)

10.4 If the report concludes that the whistleblower has raised a false or malicious concern, the whistleblower may be subject to disciplinary action.

11.0 If you are not satisfied

11.1 If you are not satisfied with the way your concern has been handled you can raise it further using one of the contacts below:

- A member of the Senior Executive Team
- The Chair of Trustees Audit Committee – contact through the Clerk to Trustees clerk@tedwraggtrust.co.uk
- The Trusts external auditors: contact details can be obtained from the Executive Director of Finance
- Protect: an independent whistleblowing charity (whistle@protect-advice.org.uk)
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline: help@nspcc.org.uk

12.0 Policy Circulation

12.1 This policy is provided following consultation with trade unions/professional associations and will apply to all employees. Should the Trust wish to make changes to this Policy, the required consultation must be undertaken with the recognised trade unions/professional associations.

12.2 This Policy will be published on The Trust website and will be included in the Trust's Policy Monitoring Schedule.

Appendix A- Which Policy?

