



Evolution Academy Trust
Progress through Partnership

Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

Introduction

We are clear at Evolution Academy Trust that our organisation wants to encourage staff to make disclosures when they have them and will not tolerate any detrimental impact to those who whistleblow.

This policy follows the best practice outlined in the ACAS Code of Practice.

1. Roles and Accountabilities

Evolution Academy Trust is accountable for all policies and all employees of the Academy Trust are required to adhere to our Trust policies.

2. Whistleblowing at work

- Whistleblowing is the action someone takes to report wrongdoing at work that affects others and legally, this is known as ‘making a disclosure in the public interest.’
- By law (Public interest Disclosure Act 1998), employees are protected from unfair dismissal or detriment (treatment or situation made worse) if they make a qualifying disclosure.
- Evolution Academy Trust recognises that support may be required from the outset of an employee making a disclosure.
- A qualifying disclosure fits into one of the categories below through ‘reasonable belief’ and is in the public interest.

3. What someone can whistleblow about

- A criminal offence
- Breach of legal obligation
- Someone’s health and safety being placed in danger
- Miscarriage of justice
- Damage to the environment
- Covering up any of the above issues.

4. Resolving other problems

It is important that employees follow the appropriate policy. In some personal cases, or areas beyond those above, the use of other policies (e.g. grievance or safeguarding policies) may be used to resolve employee matters.

5. How to make a disclosure

You should consider making the disclosure to your employer first. In most cases, this will mean your case is dealt with quickly and by the most appropriate person.

- You should be clear 'in writing' that you are 'making a disclosure' – this could be an email or letter.
- In your disclosure, you could include: background and reasons behind the concern; whether you have raised this previously and their response, and any relevant dates.
- You may also give any relevant evidence.

6. How your employer will deal with whistleblowing disclosures

- All concerns will be handled with fairness and consistency, ensuring no detriment.
- Respond in writing within 5 working days of receipt.
- Keep the identity of the whistleblower confidential and provide other support if needed.
- Listen to the concerns raised and evidence.
- Reassure the whistleblower and try to answer any questions.
- Take appropriate action, including referrals to appropriate body, investigations, and other proportionate actions.
- Keep the whistleblower informed and give feedback after the investigation.
- In line with our Data protection policies, EAT will maintain records of the number and nature of whistleblowing disclosures, enabling best practice and continual evaluations.

7. If you wish to speak to someone else or need more advice

- Speak the person responsible for the wrong-doing.
- Speak to your Trade Union.
- Seek legal advice
- Talk to your local MP
- Contact Prevent <https://protect-advice.org.uk/>
- ACAS helpline <https://www.acas.org.uk/contact>