

<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure</b>
<b>Issue date (m/y)</b>	03/2012
<b>Author</b>	Laura Cook, Director
<b>Approved by</b>	Donna Welburn, Operations Manager
<b>Review date (m/y)</b>	07/2016

## Context and /or Aims

The aim of this policy document is to establish, implement and monitor mechanisms whereby any employee of The Learning Support Centre Ltd can raise a concern without feeling vulnerable.

It is normal to have concerns about what is happening at work. Usually these are easily resolved. However, when the concern feels more serious because it is about a service user, colleague, malpractice, health and safety or a possible fraud that might affect others or the organisation itself, it can be difficult to know what to do.

You may be worried about raising such a concern and may think it best to keep it to yourself, perhaps feeling it is none of your business or that it is only a suspicion. You may feel that raising the matter would be disloyal to colleagues, managers or to the organisation. You may decide to say something but find that you have spoken to the wrong person or raised the issue in the wrong way and are not sure what to do next.

We believe that it is important for employees and stakeholders of The Learning Support Centre Ltd to be able to question what is going on without fear of criticism or victimisation; and that it is safe and acceptable to raise any concern about the above mentioned issues sooner rather than later and in the right way.

Rather than wait for proof, we would prefer you to raise the matter when it is still a concern without fear of victimisation or harassment. This policy applies to all those who work for us; whether full-time or part-time, self-employed contractor or as a volunteer. If something is troubling you which you think we should know about or look into, please use this policy. This Whistleblowing Policy is primarily for concerns where the interests of others or of the organisation itself are at risk.

### Aims:

- To provide an avenue for you to raise any concern you might have and to receive feedback on action taken.
- To allow you to take the matter further if you are dissatisfied with the initial response you received.
- To reassure you that you will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for raising a concern in good faith.

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## Policy Statement

This policy is intended to cover concerns that fall outside the scope of the Grievance Procedure and the Disciplinary Procedure. Such concern may be about something that:

- Is unlawful
- Is against the Companies' standing orders or policies
- Falls below our established standards or practice
- Is improper conduct.

There is a Grievance Procedure in order that you can raise any concerns relating to your own employment. There is a Disciplinary Procedure which helps ensure consistent and fair treatment of all employees whilst ensuring that all employees achieve and maintain satisfactory standards of conduct and job performance.

## Requirements for Implementation

### Our assurances to you

#### Your safety

The Director is committed to this policy. If you raise a genuine concern under this policy, you will not be at risk of losing your job or suffering any form of retribution as a result. Provided you are acting in good faith, it does not matter if you are mistaken. We cannot extend this assurance to someone who maliciously raises a matter they know is untrue.

#### Your confidence

With these assurances, we hope you will raise your concern openly. However, we recognise that there may be circumstances when you would prefer to speak to someone in confidence first. If so, please say so at the outset. If you ask us not to disclose your identity, we will not do so without your consent unless required by law. You should understand that there may be times when we are unable to resolve a concern without revealing your identity, for example where your personal evidence is essential. In such cases, we will discuss with you whether and how the matter can best proceed.

If you do not tell us who you are, it will be much more difficult for us to look into the matter. We will not be able to protect your position or to give you feedback. Accordingly you should not assume we can provide the assurances we offer in the same way if you report a concern anonymously. If you are unsure about raising a concern you can get independent advice from Public Concern at Work (see contact details under Independent Advice).

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## How to raise a concern

- If you have a concern about malpractice, we hope you will feel able to raise it first with your direct line manager. If your concern is more serious/sensitive or if you believe your concern involves management malpractice you should approach either Donna Welburn or Laura Cook.
- You may present your concerns in writing, this will give you the opportunity to set out the background and history of the concern giving as many details as possible e.g. give names, dates, places and the reasons why you are particularly concerned about the situation. You may also present your concerns verbally – by asking for a meeting with whichever manager you consider most appropriate.
- Although you are not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, you will be expected to demonstrate to the manager to whom you reported the issue that there are sufficient grounds for your concerns.
- If you want to raise the issue in confidence, please state this at the outset so appropriate arrangements can be made.

## Independent Advice

If you want to raise a concern about the Company Director or are unsure whether to use this Policy, or want confidential advice, you may contact the independent charity Public Concern at Work on **020 7404 6609** or by email at **whistle@pcaw.org.uk**. They can talk you through your options and help you raise a concern about malpractice at work.

## How we will handle the matter

Once you have told us of your concern, we will assess it and consider what action may be appropriate. This may involve an informal review, an internal inquiry or a more formal investigation. We will tell you who will be handling the matter, how you can contact them, and what further assistance we may need from you. If you ask, we will write to you summarising your concern and setting out how we propose to handle it. If we have misunderstood the concern or there is any information missing please let us know.

When you raise the concern it will be helpful to know how you think the matter might best be resolved. If you have any personal interest in the matter, we do ask that you tell us at the outset. If we think your concern falls more properly within our grievance, bullying and harassment or other relevant procedure, we will let you know.

Whenever possible, we will give you feedback on the outcome of any investigation. Please note, however, that we may not be able to tell you about the precise actions we take where this would infringe a duty of confidence we owe to another person.

While we cannot guarantee that we will respond to all matters in the way that you might wish, we will strive to handle the matter fairly and properly. By using this policy you will help us to achieve this.

## External Contact

While we hope this policy gives you the reassurance you need to raise your concern internally with us, we recognise that there may be circumstances where you can properly report a concern to an outside body. In fact, we would rather you raised a matter with the appropriate regulator – such as those listed in the table over leaf – than not at all. Public Concern at Work will be able to advise you on such an option if you wish.

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## Regulator Contact Details

Care Quality Commission: regulates adult social and health care in England	T: 03000 616161 Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk CQC Customer Services Centre Citygate, Gallowgate Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA www.cqc.org.uk
Ofsted: regulates education and care services for children and young people	T: 0300 1233155 Email: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk WBHL Ofsted Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester, M1 2WD www.ofsted.gov.uk

Or if there is a complaint against a person who is a member of a professional body, you could inform:

## Regulator Contact Details

General Medical Council	T: 0161 923 6602 Email: practise@gmc-uk.org www.gmc-org.uk
Health Professions Council	T: 0800 328 4218, Email: ftp@hpc-uk.org www.hcpc-org.uk

## Non whistleblowing issues

As noted above, whistleblowing is the raising of a concern where others, or the organisation itself, are at risk. However, should you wish to raise an issue that concerns yourself there are a number of ways that you can do this.

In order to carry out its statutory and administrative functions The Learning Support Centre Ltd needs to collect and process personal information relating to many categories of people, including students, employees, clients and suppliers.

We recognise the right to confidentiality of personal information and therefore take all reasonable steps to comply with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998.

## Related Documents

Compliments and Complaints Procedure

Disciplinary and Grievance Policy and Procedure