



Prepared by:

**TONY LACEY**

Chief Executive Officer

Signature:

Date:

13<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Approved by:

**CLAIRE JACKSON**

Chief Operating and Finance  
Officer

13<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**JANE OWENS**

Chair of Trustees

13<sup>th</sup> September 2023

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. We are committed to running our Trust and its academies with honesty and integrity and we expect all staff to maintain high standards. We encourage staff to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible.
- 1.2. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1. This policy applies to all individuals working at all levels of the Trust and its academies, including all teaching and non teaching staff, officers, governors, trustees, consultants, contractors, trainees, part-time and fixed-term workers, casual and agency staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as "staff" in this policy).

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

- 3.1. Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to the Trust's and academies' activities. This includes but is not limited to:
  - 3.1.1. Bribery, fraud or corruption.
  - 3.1.2. Conduct which has failed, or is likely to fail, to comply with a legal or professional obligation.
  - 3.1.3. Disclosure related to miscarriages of justice.
  - 3.1.4. Actions which endanger the health or safety of any individual, including risks to children or the public as well as other workers.
  - 3.1.5. Sexual or physical abuse of children/staff.
  - 3.1.6. Neglect or emotional abuse of children.
  - 3.1.7. Damage to the environment.
  - 3.1.8. Theft or misuse of Trust / school property or assets.
  - 3.1.9. The unauthorised use of public funds.
  - 3.1.10. Serious departure from professional standards.

- 3.2. This policy should not be used for complaints relating to your own personal circumstances, such as the way you have been treated at work. In those cases you should use the Grievance Procedure or Fair Treatment at Work Policy as appropriate. If you are uncertain whether something is within the scope of this policy you should seek advice from the Whistleblowing Officer, whose contact details are at the end of this policy.

#### **4. Procedure**

- 4.1. We hope that in many cases you will be able to raise any concerns with your manager. However, where you prefer not to raise it with your manager for any reason, you should contact the Whistleblowing Officer or the Chair of the Trust Board. Contact details are at the end of this policy.
- 4.2. We will arrange a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You may bring a colleague or union representative to any meetings under this policy. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

#### **5. Confidentiality**

- 5.1. We hope that staff will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. Completely anonymous disclosures are difficult to investigate. If you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret and only reveal it where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern. Confidentiality may not be possible where a concern leads, for example, to a full investigation.

#### **6. External disclosures**

- 6.1. The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.
- 6.2. The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. Public Concern at Work operates a confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

#### **7. Protection and support for whistleblowers**

- 7.1. We aim to encourage openness and will support staff who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

- 7.2. Staff must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a genuine in good faith. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the Whistleblowing Officer or the Chair of the Trust Board immediately. If the matter is not remedied you should raise it formally using the Trust's Grievance Procedure or Fair Treatment at Work Policy as appropriate.
- 7.3. Staff must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. Anyone involved in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 7.4. If we conclude that a whistleblower has made false allegations maliciously or with a view to personal gain, the whistleblower may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 7.5. Public Concern at Work operates a confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

## 8. Contacts

Whistleblowing Officer	Tony Lacey  0151 203 0935  ceo@oaktreesmat.co.uk
Chair of Audit Committee	Murray Freeman  0151 203 0935  admin@oaktreesmat.co.uk
Chair of Trust Board of Governors	Jane Owens  0151 203 0935  chair@oaktreesmat.co.uk
Protect <a href="http://www.protect-advice.org.uk">www.protect-advice.org.uk</a>  (Independent whistleblowing charity)	Helpline: (020) 7404 6609  E-mail: whistle@pcaw.co.uk  Website: www.pcaw.co.uk

## 9. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed in September 2025.