



Whistleblowing Policy

Version	Edited by	Date	Review Date
1	Zena Hardy	September 2025	September 2026

1. Policy Statement

We Believe You Achieve is committed to the highest standards of honesty, openness, and accountability. Staff, volunteers, and stakeholders are encouraged to raise any concerns about suspected wrongdoing, malpractice, or risks to the safety and wellbeing of learners, staff, or the organisation.

This policy enables concerns to be raised confidentially, investigated appropriately, and addressed promptly, without fear of victimisation or disadvantage.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide clear procedures for reporting concerns (“whistleblowing”).
- Promote a culture of openness and integrity.
- Ensure concerns are taken seriously and investigated fairly.
- Protect whistleblowers from detrimental treatment or retaliation.
- Comply with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and Ofsted expectations for alternative education providers.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All contracted employees.
- Volunteers, mentors, contractors, and agency staff.
- Partner organisations and referring schools who work closely with our provision.

It covers concerns about:

- Safeguarding or child protection failures.
- Criminal offences.
- Breaches of legal obligations or statutory guidance (e.g. KCSIE).
- Health and safety risks.
- Fraud, corruption, or financial malpractice.
- Concealment of wrongdoing.
- Serious breaches of internal policies or professional conduct standards.

Whistleblowing is distinct from personal grievances. Personal employment grievances should be raised through the Grievance Procedure or Disciplinary Policy.

4. Reporting Concerns Internally

Concerns should be raised as soon as possible. Whistleblowers can raise concerns verbally or in writing with:

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Zena Hardy – Rachael Carter
- **Director:** Zena Hardy

Concerns can be reported:

- In person.
- By telephone.
- By email.
- Using the Safeguarding Incident Form if relevant.

Where appropriate, concerns will be handled under the safeguarding procedures in line with KCSIE and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

5. Confidentiality and Anonymity

All whistleblowing concerns will be treated confidentially.

- The identity of the whistleblower will not be disclosed without their consent, unless required by law.
- Anonymous concerns will be considered, although investigation may be more difficult.
- Records will be securely stored in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.

6. Investigation

- Concerns will be acknowledged within 5 working days.
- A proportionate investigation will be undertaken by the Director or an appointed independent investigator.
- Where safeguarding is involved, concerns will be referred to the relevant statutory agencies immediately.
- Whistleblowers will be informed of the outcome where appropriate, subject to confidentiality or legal restrictions.

7. Protection from Victimisation

We Believe You Achieve will not tolerate harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern.

- Whistleblowers are protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- Any employee who retaliates against someone for whistleblowing may face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

8. External Reporting Routes

If a whistleblower feels unable to raise their concern internally, or believes their concern has not been adequately addressed, they may contact external bodies, including:

- **Ofsted Whistleblowing Hotline:**
0300 123 3155
whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk
WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
- **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** – for safeguarding concerns.
- **Police or other statutory agencies** – for criminal matters.
- **Public Concern at Work (Protect)** – independent whistleblowing charity offering confidential advice.

Whistleblowers are encouraged to raise concerns internally first wherever possible.

9. False or Malicious Allegations

Concerns raised in good faith will always be taken seriously, even if unproven. However, deliberate false or malicious allegations may result in disciplinary action.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if required by legislative changes, Ofsted guidance, or operational needs.