



# Whistleblowing Policy

**Scope of policy:** All learners, staff and Trustees

**Approved by:** Senior Leadership Team / Trustees February 2023

**Review Date:** February 2024

inspire+ is committed to conducting all business with honesty and integrity and we expect our staff and partners to maintain high standards in accordance with all our policies and procedures. All organisations run the risk of things going wrong from time to time, or of unknowingly harbouring illegal or unethical conduct. A culture of openness and accountability is essential in order to prevent such situations occurring or to address them when they arise.

**The aims of this policy are:**

- To encourage staff to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as appropriate and that their confidentiality will be respected.
- To provide staff with guidance as to how to raise their concerns.
- To reassure staff that they will be able to raise genuine concerns without fear of reprisal, even if the concerns turn out to be mistaken.

**Who does this policy apply to:**

This policy applies to everyone who carries out work for Inspire+, including:

- Partners
- All employees
- Apprentices
- Work experience or other trainees
- Trustees

**What is Whistleblowing:**

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing, generally a breach of a legal, statutory or regulatory requirement or illegal and immoral behaviour. This includes:

- Breach of legal requirements- e.g. health and safety obligations
- General malpractice, such as immoral, illegal or unethical conduct
- Gross misconduct
- Concerns in relation to bribery
- Breach of any of the charity's policies

If you have any genuine concerns related to the above, you should report it under this policy to either the C.E.O. or the Chair of Trustees.

**Protected disclosures:**

An individual making a protected disclosure is given statutory protection from victimisation under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1996, provided the disclosure is in the public interest.

A protected disclosure is any disclosure of information which, in the reasonable belief of the individual making the disclosure, tend to show that one or more of the following has been committed or is likely to be committed. The disclosure must be in accordance with certain conditions, which are less onerous if the disclosure is made internally:

- A criminal offence
- A failure to comply with any legal obligations
- A miscarriage of justice
- The putting of someone's health or safety in danger
- Damage to the environment
- Deliberate concealment of any information relating to the above

It is immaterial whether the information is confidential. A legal obligation can include a contractual or other civil obligation as well as an obligation under criminal law. Certain instances of wrongdoing as described above under "what is whistleblowing" for example breaches of code of conduct, do not constitute a protected disclosure. You should seek advice if unsure on this point See where to get independent advice below.

### **Raising a Whistleblowing Concern**

All whistleblowing disclosures will be treated as confidential and will be reported to either the C.E.O or Chair of Trustees.

You should make it clear that you are making a disclosure within the terms of the Charity's whistleblowing policy. This will ensure the recipient of the disclosure realises this and takes the necessary action to investigate the disclosure and to protect the whistle-blower's identity. Either the C.E.O. or Chair of Trustees will then get in touch with you to discuss your concern. We will aim to keep you informed of the progress of the investigation and its likely timescale. However, sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent us giving you specific details of the investigation or any disciplinary action taken as a result.

You must treat any information about the investigation as confidential. Whilst we cannot guarantee the outcome you are seeking, we will try to deal with your concern fairly and in an appropriate way. By using this policy you can help to achieve this. If you are not happy with the way in which your concern has been dealt with, you can raise it with the trustees of the charity.

### **Confidentiality**

We hope staff will feel able to voice concerns openly under this policy. However, if you want to raise your concerns confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret. If it is necessary for anyone investigating your concern to know your identity, we will obtain your permission first.

We do not encourage staff to raise concerns anonymously. Proper investigation may be more difficult or impossible if we cannot obtain further information from you. It is also more difficult to establish whether any allegations are credible. If you are concerned about possible reprisals if your identity is revealed, you should come forward to the C.E.O or Chair of Trustees who will take appropriate measures to preserve confidentiality and your identity. Anonymous concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as fully as is possible. The Charity is not responsible for maintaining anonymity if you have told others of the alleged misdemeanour.

### **Protection and Support for Whistle-blowers**

It is understandable that whistle-blowers are worried about possible repercussions. We aim to encourage openness and will support staff members that raise genuine concerns under this

policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken. Inspire+ recognises that whistle-blowers are supported under UK legislation under the Public Interest Disclosure Act.

### **External Disclosures**

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. In some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body, such as a School Games Organiser. It will never be appropriate to alert the media. We strongly encourage you to seek advice from the C.E.O. or Chair of Trustees before reporting a concern to anyone external.

### **Where can I get independent advice?**

The Independent whistleblowing charity, Public Concern at Work, operates a confidential helpline. They also have a list of prescribed regulators for reporting certain types of concern. Their helpline is on 020 3117 2520

More information on this matter can be found at: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Signed on behalf of inspire+

**Dated:** February 2023

**Review:** February2024