

December 2020



# *Confidential Reporting*

**Approved By:** The Trust Board

**Date Approved:** 15 December 2020

**Adopted by Trust Board on:** 15 December 2020

**Review Frequency:** Annual

In response to the Coronavirus pandemic in 2020, face-to-face meetings may need to be held virtually using video conferencing technology. Email, letter or telephone call can be used to raise a concern. Any face-to-face meeting must be pre-arranged subject to the agreement of the Headteacher or the Local Governing Body or the CEO or the Trust Board (depending on the nature of the meeting). All face-to-face meetings must adhere to the Systems of Control (protective measures) as set out in the DFE guidance and on which the Trust's Risk Assessment is based.

*Overarching statement approved at Trust Board meeting 6 Oct 2020*

## **Rationale:**

Horncastle Education Trust expects the highest standards of conduct from all community members and will treat seriously any concern that a member of its community may have about improper or illegal conduct.

### **1. Confidential Reporting - Raising a Concern at Work or School**

- 1.1. Without fear of recrimination, members of the school community are expected to bring to the attention of the Headteacher any serious impropriety or breach of procedure.
- 1.2. If their concern is about the Headteacher then it should be brought to the attention of the Chair of the Local Governing Body or to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Horncastle Education Trust.
- 1.3. If their concern is about the CEO, the Chair of Governors or any member of the Local Governing Body, then it should be brought to the attention of the Chair of the Trust Board.
- 1.4. Where the concern is about safeguarding children and young people, the designated Child Protection Officer (Safeguarding Lead) at the relevant Trust School should be notified immediately. These procedures are covered in each of Trust School's Child Protection Policy.
- 1.5. Procedures for reporting concerns about professional performance are dealt with separately and covered in other policies such as Capability.

### **2. Mechanism for Raising a Concern**

- 2.1. Members of the school community who in good faith, want to raise a concern will be able to do so without fear of recrimination. The Trustees at Horncastle Education Trust will not tolerate harassment or any form of victimisation of any member of its community raising a concern. Where anonymity is requested, every effort will be made to meet the request but it may not be always possible.
- 2.2. Depending on the nature of the concern, justification and support of the claim may be required. This will normally be asked for in writing. It is helpful to note down any facts, dates and times as they happen.
- 2.3. Members of the community who want to report something but feel uneasy may wish to bring a friend or colleague or representative to any discussions. This third party needs to be independent from the concern being raised; their presence is to offer moral support for the individual raising a concern.
- 2.4. You may prefer to use email, a letter, a telephone call or a face to face meeting to raise their concern with the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors or CEO or the Chair of the Trust Board. The Head's PA or the Clerk to the Governors can supply you with the appropriate contact details; these are available on each individual Trust school's website or through Horncastle Education Trust's website.
- 2.5. The Headteacher or Chair of Governors or CEO or Chair of the Trust Board will act swiftly and constructively in the investigation of any concerns in accordance with the Trust's disciplinary procedures.
- 2.6. Confidential Reporting procedures are not designed to be used as an alternative to the Trust's Grievance Procedure.