



TAPESTRY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

Whistleblowing Policy

Department:	People & Culture
Policy Owner:	Head of People & Culture
Date of issue:	July 2026
Date revised:	
Next review date:	July 2029

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Summary of changes

Contents

1.0 Aims.....4

2.0 Legislation4

3.0 Raising a Concern.....5

4.0 Investigating Concerns.....6

5.0 Malicious or Vexatious Complaints.....6

6.0 Contacting External Organisations7

7.0 Monitoring and Reporting7

1.0 Aims

Whistleblowing is the reporting, by those working for or on behalf of Tapestry Learning Partnership (Tapestry), of suspected wrongdoing on the part of staff including volunteers, trustees and governors. Such wrongdoing might include fraud, malpractice, breach of health and safety law or some other illegal act.

Tapestry is committed to achieving the highest possible standards of honesty, openness and accountability and relies on its staff to help maintain these standards. In pursuit of these aims, Tapestry encourages all individuals to raise concerns which they may have about the conduct or practices of others. This policy sets out how such concerns will be dealt with. It applies to all staff including volunteers, trustees and governors. Other individuals performing work on behalf of Tapestry, such as agency workers and contractors, are also encouraged to use it.

This policy aims to give those working on behalf of Tapestry the confidence to raise serious concerns using the routes provided, and to reassure individuals of the protection they are afforded when they reasonably believe the information disclosed is substantially true and that disclosure is in the public interest.

This policy will be fairly and consistently applied in accordance with Tapestry's commitment to equal opportunities.

2.0 Legislation

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (by way of amendment to the Employment Rights Act 1996) is designed to provide protection to workers who raise genuine concerns about specified matters. These are known as "qualifying disclosures". The specified matters are:

- Conduct which is a criminal offence;
- Breaches of financial management procedures;
- Breach of any other legal obligation;
- Disclosures related to miscarriages of justice;
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public or pupils/students as well as other staff;
- Damage to the environment; or
- Deliberate concealment of any of the above.

This policy should be read alongside the Tapestry's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). All staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice, safeguarding failures, or concerns about adults working with children, and such concerns will be taken seriously and managed in accordance with relevant safeguarding requirements.

An individual who makes a qualifying disclosure has the right not to be dismissed, subjected to any other detriment or victimised because they have made the disclosure. Tapestry will not tolerate any act of harassment or victimisation resulting from an individual raising a concern where they reasonably believe the information disclosed is true and the disclosure is in the public interest. An individual making an allegation within the scope of this policy will be supported by Tapestry when raising a concern, providing that they:

- Believe the concern to be true;
- Are not acting maliciously or making false allegations;

3.0 Raising a Concern

As a first step, individuals should normally raise concerns with their immediate line manager (if relevant), their Headteacher or their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), where this is appropriate to the nature of the concern. If the allegations involve the Headteacher, individuals should raise the matter with Tapestry's Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Where a concern relates to the CEO, or another senior leader, the concern may be raised directly with the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Concerns relating to safeguarding, child protection, or the welfare of children may be raised under this policy where the individual reasonably believes that there has been wrongdoing, unsafe practice, a failure to follow safeguarding procedures, or an attempt to conceal such matters. Such concerns should also be reported immediately in accordance with Tapestry's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Nothing in this policy prevents an individual from reporting safeguarding concerns directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Social Care, the Police or any other appropriate statutory authority.

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing, but the earlier the concern is expressed the easier it is to take any required action. Where a concern is raised verbally, the person hearing it must ensure that a written statement of it is made to assist with any subsequent investigation. Tapestry management will take all concerns raised within the scope of this policy seriously and identify the appropriate level of investigation, taking external advice as necessary. The concerns raised will be treated in confidence, whilst recognising that the individual raising the concerns may need to come forward as a witness at a later date.

The whistleblower may invite a recognised trade union representative or a work colleague to be present during any meetings or interviews held in connection with the concerns raised.

If an individual requests that their identity be protected, it will not be disclosed unless Tapestry is required to do so in law. Whilst Tapestry will not refuse to consider anonymous reports, those making them must be aware that it is considerably more difficult to investigate matters properly in such circumstances or to resolve the concern satisfactorily.

While Tapestry encourages individuals to raise their concerns internally, Tapestry also recognises that some individuals may feel unable to do this and that they may therefore wish to contact an independent, external organisation (see Section 6).

4.0 Investigating Concerns

Preliminary enquiries will be made into the concerns raised to establish whether a formal investigation is required. Immediate action may be taken prior to an investigation being conducted if there are concerns for the safety or welfare of children/young people or others.

If a formal investigation is not to be undertaken, the reasons why will be explained to the individual as soon as possible. If an investigation is undertaken, this will normally be conducted by an appropriate senior individual with no previous involvement with the concerns raised. In certain cases, this may involve governors, trustees and/or an external independent investigator. The investigation will be conducted, where appropriate, in accordance with Tapestry's other relevant internal procedures which could involve the suspension of staff on full pay whilst the investigation is being carried out. Investigations involving child protection issues will not commence until external advice has been sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Written records will be maintained throughout the investigation, and the individual will be kept informed, where appropriate, of the progress of the investigation and any anticipated timescales. The investigator will report the outcome of the investigation to the Headteacher and/or the CEO or Chair of the Board of Trustees as soon as reasonably practicable following the conclusion of enquiries. The Headteacher and/or the CEO or Chair of Trustees in consultation with the Head of People and Culture will determine any necessary action, which may include referral to the Local Authority, an appropriate government department, regulatory body or the police, and/or action under relevant Tapestry procedures, including disciplinary procedures. Subject to legal, confidentiality and data protection requirements, the individual who raised the concern will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and any actions to be taken.

5.0 Malicious or Vexatious Complaints

If an individual raises a concern which they reasonably believe to be true and in the public interest, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against them. If, however, an allegation is made frivolously, maliciously or

for personal gain, disciplinary action is likely to be taken in accordance with the Tapestry's disciplinary procedure.

6.0 Contacting External Organisations

Tapestry encourages individuals to make use of the internal procedure before considering referring concerns outside Tapestry. If an individual feels that it is right to take the matter outside of Tapestry, contact can be made with a recognised trade union, local Citizens Advice Bureau, relevant voluntary or independent organisation or legal advisor. The Public Interest Disclosure Act also sets out a number of bodies to which protected disclosures can be made, including HM Revenue & Customs, the Health and Safety Executive and the Serious Fraud Office. Individuals should be aware that going directly to the press may limit their protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act and they could therefore be subject to disciplinary action as a result. An individual considering such a course of action is strongly advised to seek prior advice from their trade union or Protect – The UK's Whistleblowing Charity: <https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

7.0 Monitoring and Reporting

The Board of Trustees will receive reports from the Head of People & Culture in respect of any disclosures to ensure enclosures are dealt with in line with this policy.