

SPARK ACADEMY

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Purpose

Spark Academy Tutoring is committed to the highest standards of integrity, honesty, and accountability in all areas of its work. This Whistleblowing Policy provides a framework for tutors, contractors, and stakeholders to raise concerns about possible wrongdoing, malpractice, or risks to children, young people, or the public interest, without fear of reprisal.

The policy is designed to ensure that all concerns are taken seriously and dealt with appropriately, even though Spark Academy's tutors are self-employed freelancers rather than employees.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All freelance tutors working on behalf of Spark Academy Tutoring
- The Director of Spark Academy Tutoring
- Any individuals or organisations who have contact with Spark Academy through its services, including schools, local authorities, pupils, and parents

Definition of Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern about suspected wrongdoing or risk that affects others (e.g., pupils, staff, or the public interest). It is not the same as a personal complaint or grievance about one's own situation—such matters should be raised under the Compliments and Complaints Policy.

Raising a Concern or Complaint

We understand that sometimes things may not go as expected. If you have a concern or complaint, we encourage you to raise it as soon as possible so that we can work together to resolve it fairly and efficiently.

Responsibilities

- The Director of Spark Academy Tutoring is responsible for receiving, investigating, and responding to whistleblowing concerns.
- All freelance tutors and associates have a duty to report any concerns relating to safeguarding, unethical practice, or potential harm to children or vulnerable individuals.
- Where a concern relates to the Director, it should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the relevant Local Safeguarding Partnership.

How to Raise a Concern

Concerns should ideally be raised as soon as possible so that appropriate action can be taken. You may raise a concern by:

- Email: contact@sparkacademytutoring.com
- Phone: 01226 899567

When raising a concern, please provide as much detail as possible, including:

- What has happened or is suspected
 - When and where it occurred
- Who was involved or may have knowledge of the matter
 - Whether any evidence exists

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If you feel unable to raise a concern internally, you may contact:

- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the concern relates to a child protection matter
- The Police, if there is an immediate risk of harm

Safeguarding-Related Concerns

Spark Academy Tutoring operates within a safeguarding framework. If a concern relates to the safety or welfare of a child or young person, it should be treated as a safeguarding disclosure and reported immediately in line with Spark Academy's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. In such cases, the Director will follow statutory safeguarding procedures and inform relevant agencies as required.

Confidentiality and Protection

Spark Academy will handle all whistleblowing concerns confidentially and will make every effort to protect the identity of the individual raising the concern, unless disclosure is required by law. No tutor or contractor will suffer any form of retaliation or disadvantage for raising a concern in good faith, even if it is later found to be unsubstantiated. However, malicious or deliberately false allegations may be treated as a serious matter and could affect future working relationships with Spark Academy.

Investigation Process

- The Director will acknowledge receipt of a whistleblowing concern within 10 working days.
- An initial assessment will be made to determine the nature and urgency of the issue.
- Where necessary, a full investigation will be undertaken, which may include gathering statements or consulting with external agencies (e.g., safeguarding authorities or law enforcement).
- A written outcome or summary of actions taken will be shared with the whistleblower where appropriate, respecting confidentiality and data protection obligations.

Record Keeping

All whistleblowing reports will be recorded securely and confidentially by the Director. Records will include the nature of the concern, actions taken, and the outcome. These records will be retained in accordance with data protection legislation and may be reviewed as part of ongoing safeguarding audits.

8. Review

Spark Academy Tutoring is committed to fostering an open culture where individuals feel confident to speak up. Feedback from whistleblowing cases will be used to review internal practices and strengthen the safeguarding and governance framework. This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation or best practice guidance changes.

Approved by: Becky Ingram

Position: Director

October 2025

October 2026