

Complaints & Whistleblowing Policy

This policy was written with guidance from NCVO

This policy was created in **January 2025**

This policy was last updated in **March 2025**

This policy is due for review no later than **March 2026**

1. About this policy and procedure

- a. It's important that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by those working on behalf of Selby CoderDojo is reported and dealt with properly.
- b. This document sets out how you should report concerns and how we'll deal with them.

2. What is whistleblowing?

- a. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 to provide protection for workers who make a 'qualifying disclosure'.
- b. A qualifying disclosure is where a volunteer (or employee) has a reasonable belief that any of the following is being, has been, or is likely to be committed, and reports (discloses) it in the public interest.
 - i. A criminal offence
 - ii. A miscarriage of justice
 - iii. An act causing risk to health and safety
 - iv. An act causing damage to the environment
 - v. A breach of any other legal obligation
 - vi. Concealment of any of the above
- c. This is also known as 'whistleblowing'.
- d. You don't need to prove your disclosure – a reasonable belief is enough. You are not responsible for investigating the matter – it's our responsibility to ensure an investigation takes place.
- e. If you make a qualifying disclosure you have the right not to be dismissed or victimised as a result. An example of victimisation would be an employer deciding not to promote someone because they've made a disclosure.
- f. If you want to make a qualifying disclosure, we recommend you follow the procedure set out in this document.

3. Policy principles

- a. Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing. Volunteers (or employees) working on behalf of the charity should look out for illegal or unethical conduct and report anything they become aware of.

- b. Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation reported back to the person who raised the issue.
- c. No volunteer or other person working on behalf of the charity will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means your rights won't be affected if you raise a legitimate concern.
- d. If we discover misconduct as a result of any investigation under this procedure, we'll take appropriate and proportionate action.
- e. We'll take appropriate and proportionate action against anyone maliciously making a false allegation.
- f. Instructing someone to cover up wrongdoing is wrong. If you're told not to raise or pursue a concern, even by someone in a position of authority, you shouldn't agree to remain silent. You should report the matter to one of the trustees.

4. Complaints from young people, parents or carers

- a. Young people, parents and carers of young people who attend Selby CoderDojo, who are directly affected by the concern being made may make a complaint under this policy.
- b. Complaints will only be accepted within three months of the date that the complainant reasonably knew enough facts to report the issue.
 - i. This excludes complaints made that involve safeguarding concerns.
- c. If there's reasonable belief that a complaint is vexatious or malicious, it won't be progressed. A vexatious or malicious complaint is one made without a genuine basis, often with the intent to harass, annoy, or damage the reputation of the person or entity being complained against, rather than to seek a legitimate resolution.
- d. Wherever possible, we will try to resolve any complaints openly, directly and informally. If this is not possible, the steps set out in section 5 of this policy should be followed.

5. Complaints & Whistleblowing procedure

a. Stage one

- i. If you want to make a complaint or qualifying disclosure, you should raise it with one of the trustees, who will arrange an investigation of the matter. We may ask you and other individuals involved to write a statement to support the investigation. Any investigation will be carried out in accordance with the principles set out above.
- ii. Your statement will be considered, and you'll be asked to comment on any additional evidence we obtain during the course of the investigation. The trustee will take any necessary action, including reporting the matter to the trustee board and any appropriate government department or regulatory agency.
- iii. Once the investigation is complete, you'll be told the outcome and what we have done, or propose to do, about it. If we won't be taking action, we'll explain why.

b. Stage two

- i. You should escalate the matter to the remaining trustees if you're concerned that the trustees you originally complained to:
 - 1. is involved in the wrongdoing
 - 2. has failed to investigate properly
 - 3. has failed to report the outcome of the investigation to the right people.
- ii. The trustees will arrange for the investigation to be reviewed, make any necessary enquiries, and make their own report to the board.

c. Stage three

- i. If following stages one and two you reasonably believe that the appropriate action hasn't been taken, you should report the matter to the relevant body. This includes:
 1. HM Revenue & Customs
 2. The Health and Safety Executive
 3. The Serious Fraud Office
 4. The Charity Commission
 5. The Information Commissioner
 6. GOV.UK has published the [full list of prescribed people and bodies for whistleblowing](#).