

Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

Whistleblowing is a term used when an employee wishes to raise concerns about wrongdoing or malpractice witnessed in their workplace.

Whistleblowing is very different from a **complaint** or a **grievance**. The term 'whistleblowing' generally applies when you are acting as a witness to misconduct or malpractice that you have observed regarding practices and procedures which threatens children or other people.

Our aim:

We are committed to dealing responsibly, openly and professionally with any genuine concerns raised. We do need your help to do this. If something at work is worrying you, please do tell us.

- We aim to ensure staff understand their responsibilities and feel confident in raising and reporting a serious concern at the earliest possible opportunity
- Provide avenues for you to raise concerns and receive feedback on any action taken
- Ensure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue them if you are not satisfied
- Ensure that any legitimate concerns can be reported without fear of harassment or victimisation and every effort will be made to keep the member of staff's identity confidential
- Reassure you that you will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if you have made any disclosure in good faith

Your responsibility if you have a concern about malpractice, wrong-doing, risk or dangerous disregard for Health & Safety or illegality, then it is your responsibility to speak up as employees are often the first to realise/suspect when misconduct is happening.

Unacceptable behaviour that would justify whistleblowing may involve?

- The inappropriate treatment or care of a child
- Abuse of a child or vulnerable person
- A child, parent, employee or volunteer is/has been put at risk of harm
- Serious unsafe working practices, failing to comply with statutory and legal obligations. Using of unsafe equipment.
- Covering up wrong doing or malpractice
- A criminal offence has or is about to be committed or you fear it may happen in the future
- Bribery or corruption has or is about to take place

What should I do?

Any member of staff, student or volunteer can raise a concern regarding child protection safeguarding or wrongdoing they have been witness to by.

- **Firstly** raise your concern internally through the Manager or Designated person for safeguarding or the management committee/nominated person as appropriate.
- Discuss the nature of your concern and why you believe it to be true, together with the background, history of the concern and provide the relevant dates.
- There are no expectations to prove beyond doubt the truth of your suspicion; however you will need to demonstrate that you are acting in good faith and there are reasonable grounds for your concern.
- Negotiate independent advice as required.

Concerns will be dealt with in the following way:

Equality of all employees will be promoted including those who may be wrongly or rightly accused, initial enquiries shall be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and if so what form it should take.

Where appropriate the matters raised may:

- Be referred and put through established child protection/abuse procedures
- Form the subject of an independent inquiry
- Be handled/investigated by management, or through the disciplinary/grievance process

Within ten working days of a concern being raised, you will be informed in writing:

- Acknowledgment that the concern has been received
- An indication as to how the management have proceeded to deal with the matter if the LADO Local area designated officer has been informed.
- Supply you with information on staff support mechanisms
- Inform you as to whether any further investigation will take place and if not, why not.

It may be necessary for management to interview you to ensure that your disclosure is fully understood. Any meeting can be arranged away from your workplace, if you wish, and a representative or a friend may accompany you in support.

If there are any difficulties experienced as a result of raising a concern, these will be supported and minimised by the management.

You will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation to assure you that your disclosure has been properly addressed unless legal reasons and advice determine otherwise.

Confidentiality

We will ensure your identity is not disclosed, unless legal constraints or obligations make this impossible but every effort will be made to retain confidentiality.

Allegations and untrue Allegations

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 known as the Whistleblowing, workers are protected from reprisals for reasonably raising an honest and genuine concern internally by an individual or the organisation, provided you are acting in good faith.

If however you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, appropriate action could include disciplinary action being taken.

The organisation Public Concern at Works - run a free legal help line for people concerned about serious malpractice in the workplace. Public Concern at Work advisers can help you decide whether and/or how to raise your concern.

Call on 02074046609 or email helpline@pcaw.co.uk

For more information on the law visit: www.pcaw.co.uk/law/uklegislation.htm.

Ofsted does not investigate or follow up Whistleblowing concerns relating to individual cases except where evidence provided is of more 'systemic' failures.

Whistleblowing Hotlines are in operation Mon – Fri 8 am – 6 pm – 0300 123 3155

Email: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

Write to: WBHL, Ofsted, Royal Exchange Buildings, St Ann's Square, Manchester M2 7LA

This policy was adopted by Costock Pre-school

on 31st January 2020

Date to be reviewed January 2021

Signed by

Name of signatory