

WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

Policy Statement

It is our intention that staff working at Longwick Pre-school feel confident about coming forward and reporting any issues/concerns that they may have regarding the areas below, whilst remaining protected from any subsequent discrimination. This policy is to be used in conjunction with our Safeguarding Children & Child Protection Policy.

Aim

- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities and feel confident in raising and reporting a serious concern at the earliest opportunity.
- Provide avenues for staff to raise concerns and receive feedback on any action taken.
- Ensure that staff receive a response to their concerns and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied.
- Reassure staff that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if they have made any disclosures in good faith.

Any concerns can be reported without this leading to any harassment or victimisation, and every effort will be made to keep both the concern and the member of staff's identity confidential.

What should be reported?

- The inappropriate treatment or care of a child.
 - If it is a Safeguarding Concern then the procedures for 'Allegations against a member of Staff' section of our Safeguarding Children & Child Protection Policy should be followed, alongside the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's guidelines.
- Any breach in the behaviour of manager, staff, student or volunteer.
- Discrimination of any kind.
- Concerns that could impact on the health and safety of the children or adults.
- Inappropriate use of settings assets.
- Decision making for personal gain.
- Abuse of position.
- Inappropriate use of budget.
- Deceit.
- Tampering with documents.

Methods of reporting

- A concern can be initially raised by any staff member to their manager. In the event the concern is about the manager, then go to the Deputy Manager or the Chairperson of the committee or Ofsted (**0300 123 1231**).
- Discuss the nature of the concern together with the background, history of the concerns and provide relevant dates of incidents.
- There is no expectation that staff prove beyond a doubt the truth of their suspicion, however they will need to demonstrate that they are acting in good faith and there are reasonable grounds for their concern.
- All employees will be treated fairly.

Concerns will be dealt with in the following way:-

- Initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and if so, what form it should take.
- The incident will be investigated by the manager /committee/LADO or Ofsted.
- If it is a safeguarding concern then safeguarding procedures will be followed including those already mentioned that relate to allegations against staff and may form the subject of an independent inquiry.
- Within ten working days of the concern being raised, the member of staff will receive in writing.
- Acknowledgement that the concern has been received an indication as to how the setting will proceed to deal with the matter.
- Supply the member of staff with information on staff support mechanisms.
- Inform the member of staff concerned as to whether any further investigation will take place and if not, why not.

It may be necessary for the setting to interview staff to ensure that their disclosure is fully understood. Any meeting can be arranged away from the workplace, if so wished, and a representative or a friend may accompany the involved member of staff for support.

If there are any difficulties experienced as a result of raising a concern, support will be offered.

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

Confidentiality will be maintained and every effort will be made not to reveal a member of staff's identity if they so wish. If, however, a member of staff makes an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, appropriate action that could include disciplinary action may be taken.

The public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 seeks to protect employees from discrimination as a result of "blowing the whistle" on their organisation, or individuals within it, through amendments to employment law.

Contacts:-

- **Manager – Lisa Lowles**
- **Deputy Manager – Julia Lineham**
- **Chairperson – Alex Barter**
- **Ofsted Whistle Blowing Hotline – 0300 123 3155**
Email – whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk
- **LADO – 01296 382070**

Date Policy Implemented *April 2015*

Signed *Alex Barter*

Name and Role *Alex Barter, Committee Management Chair*

Date of Last Review *November 2023*

Date of Next Review *November 2024*