



Whistleblowing Policy

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

Policy Statement

Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within Whitchurch Pre-School. However, they may not express their growing concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances, it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may be just suspicion of malpractice and wrongdoing at work.

It is our intention that staff, volunteers and students working at Whitchurch Pre-School feel confident about coming forward and reporting any issues/concerns that they may have regarding the areas documented below, whilst remaining protected from any subsequent discrimination.

We aim to:

- 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. We aim to respond to staff concerns within 10 days, and if they are not satisfied they can then contact the number below.
- 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
- Any breach in the behaviour of Committee members, manager, staff, student or volunteers
- Discrimination of any kind
- Concerns that could impact on the health and safety of the children or adults
- Any other safeguarding event or event that causes concern

Methods

- A concern can be initially raised by any staff member, volunteer or parent to the Manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead Committee Chairperson or Committee Safeguarding Officer.
- Discuss the nature of the concern together with the background, history of the concern and provide the relevant dates of incidents. Concerns can be raised verbally but it is good practice for the concern to be put in writing. This ensures all the details are correctly understood and details are not forgotten or mistakes made.
- A distinction will be made as to whether the concern is a complaint, grievance or a whistleblowing concern.
- There is no expectation that staff prove beyond 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 concern.
- All employees will be treated fairly.

Concerns will be dealt with in the following way:

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 will proceed to deal with the matter
- Supply you with information on staff support mechanisms
- Inform you as to whether any further investigation will take place and if not, why not.

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 and/or Committee, and/or Ofsted.

Advice may be sought/a referral be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer Patrick Crawford 01305 221122.

Who to contact

Staff, students and volunteers should raise concerns with either the Manager or Committee Chairperson. However, those who feel unable to do this may prefer to contact external organisations direct for advice or to make referral.

To raise concerns about failures in practices and procedures for the safeguarding of children in early years settings in Dorset, the member of staff, volunteer or student should contact.

- Public Concern at Work 020 7404 6609, email whistle@pcaw.org.uk or online www.pcaw.org.uk PCAW give free and confidential advice and can help you to decide whether and/or how to raise your concerns at work.
- NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline 0800 028 0285 help@nspcc.org.uk
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Patrick Crawford 01305 221122
- Ofsted – Whistleblowing hotline – 0300 123 3155 (Monday – Friday from 8am to 6pm). Email whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk . By post to WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, StoreStreet. Manchester. M1 2WD.

The hotline can be used by anybody who has a whistleblowing concern about services or practice in any local authority, or in a care or educational setting regulated and inspected by Ofsted.

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.

Untrue Allegations

If you make an allegation in good faith believing it to be true, but unconfirmed by the investigation, the management will recognise your concern. If however you make 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.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Whitchurch Pre-School Safeguarding Policy, Disciplinary Policy and Confidentiality Policy, amongst others.

This policy is reviewed annually, or as deemed necessary.

Policy reviewed and updated.....(date)

Signed.....