

## **Whistle blowing policy** Reviewed September 2019

**Whistleblowing is raising a concern about malpractice within an organisation. Our playgroup is committed to delivering a high quality provision, promoting organisational accountability and maintaining public confidence.**

### **Protection of whistle-blowers:**

The Public Interest Act 1998 and 2013 encourages people to raise concerns about misconduct or malpractice in the workplace in order to promote good governance and accountability in the public interest. Concerns may be about:

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with legal obligations
- A miscarriage of justice
- Health and safety lapses endangering an environment or individual
- Deliberate concealment of information about any of the above.
- (NB this policy is not intended to stand in place of safeguarding reporting requirements)

### **Procedure**

Twyford Playgroup promotes and encourages good staff communication and any question of bad practice should be dealt with satisfactorily long before the need for Whistle Blowing. Staff should feel they could raise questions about any areas of concern during regular supervisor or staff meetings so that practises can be revised and modified before they cause harm. However, the responsibility for whistle blowing rests with a member of staff who is aware or has concerns regarding unacceptable practices. Any issues concerning area of bad practice must be dealt with in the early stages, hopefully preventing any escalation.

A whistle blower should in the first instance inform the manager of their concern. The manager will advise on the best course of action to take to investigate and resolve the matter immediately. If the employee or volunteer feels the matter cannot be discussed with the manager, he or she can contact the chairperson. The contact details for the chairperson are found in the register. Within ten working days of a concern being raised, the Manager or Chairperson must write to the employee to acknowledge that the concern has been received. They will also outline what initial steps are to be taken and timings if possible.

Concerns can be raised in a number of ways, including orally or in writing, however written statements are preferred. These disclosures must provide as much information as possible, including dates and persons involved. Employees must be able to demonstrate to the person hearing the disclosure that there are reasonable grounds for making the allegations. Although employees who wish to make an anonymous disclosure can do so, it may be appropriate for the investigating manager to know the source of the information for a full and thorough investigation to be possible. They will need to take into account the nature and credibility of an allegation before deciding whether to proceed with an investigation.

All disclosures will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made to preserve anonymity. Individuals who raise such concerns in our workplace must be confident they are protected from punishment or victimisation.

In the event that the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved within the preschool, the employee can raise their concerns with Hampshire Children's Services.

Hampshire Children's Services- Tel: 0300 555 1384

Out of hours for Children's Services- Tel 0300 555 1373

Email [childrens.services@hants.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.services@hants.gov.uk)

Children's Services address- Children's Services Department

Hampshire County Council

Elizabeth 11 Court North

The Castle

Winchester SO23 8UG

Or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

LADO – Mark Blackwell – 01962 876364

Failing this, or on advise from Children's Services, the person may contact Ofsted or the Police.

Ofsted dedicated Whistleblowing Hotline – 0300 1233155

Email Ofsted – [whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk)

Ofsted address – WBHL

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester M1 2WD

Police Tel – 101 OR 999 if a child is in immediate danger.

### **Resulting Action**

If the allegations are found to be true, the appropriate action will be taken, which may include:

- A full internal investigation, possibly resulting in disciplinary action
- Referral to Children's Services or the Police.

### **Action and Support Afterwards**

If an employee is dissatisfied with the response of the Manager and Chair, he/she can raise the matter with one of the following agencies:

Public Concern at Work tel – 020 7404 6609

The police

Ofsted

### **Legal framework and guides**

Appendix 5 of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010)

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007)

Whistleblowing- guidance for Employers and Code of Practice 2015

Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and 2013

Whistleblowing to Ofsted about safeguarding in local authority children’s services 2014

**Date:**

**Name:**

**Signed:**

**Review:**