

Whistle blowing policy

At Little Paws nursery our staff members views, feelings and opinions are respected and taken seriously in every situation. We are, as a company, committed to tackling any malpractice or wrong doing and will deal with these disclosures with immediate effect. This policy is for all staff, students and volunteers (although volunteers are NOT covered by the Public Disclosure Act 1988) who are currently employed or have left our employment. All concerns will be dealt with as soon as practically possible, ensuring the needs of the business and the safety of our children are always maintained.

Whistleblowing is the term used when someone who works with or for an organisation, wishes to raise concerns about malpractice in the organisation (for example, crimes, civil offences, miscarriages of justice, dangers to health and safety or the environment), and the cover up of any of these.

Whistleblowing is very different from a complaint or a grievance. It only applies when you have no vested interest and are acting as a witness to misconduct or malpractice that you have observed.

A complaint is more personal in that in most circumstances you or someone close to you, will have been affected by the issue concerned and you are seeking redress or justice for yourself. In these circumstances, because you have an interest in the outcome of the complaint, you would be expected to be able to prove your case; Ofsted has limited powers to deal with complaints.

A grievance is when an employee has a dispute about their own employment position. If you are an employee with a grievance, we recommend that you refer to your local procedures. Ofsted cannot take action over grievances.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) 1998, also known as the whistle blowing act is intended to promote internal and regulatory disclosures and encourage workplace accountability and self-regulation. The Act protects public interest by providing a remedy for individuals who suffer workplace reprisal for raising a genuine concern, whether it is a concern about child safeguarding and welfare systems, financial malpractice, danger, illegality or other wrongdoing. The concern may relate to something that is happening or has happened in the past. Staff are protected from reprisal if their concern is genuine and honest however you must be acting in the public interest and not for personal gain to be allowed this protection.

For more information on the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) 1998 please see www.pcaw.co.uk/law/uklegislation.htm

What should you do if you have a concern about safeguarding failures or other wrongdoing in a setting?

- Firstly raise your concern with your manager; if you are unable to do this (possibly because your concern relates to them) your concern must be raised with the owner Kate Pickles.
- However if you feel that your concern is related to the running of the business or for any other reason that you feel Kate would not be the most appropriate people to deal with the concern then please feel free, at any time to contact an outside agency for support and advice. Agencies that may be able to help you are OFSTED, an Early Years Consultant/Advisor, college or citizen advice.
- If at any time during the process you are unhappy with the response you must seek independent help and support.
- It is advisable, in terms of both addressing the concern and securing their own protection as a whistle-blower, to raise this first with a body that has some oversight of the work of the

setting. This may be a governing body/committee, the local authority early years and childcare service, a national regulator such as Ofsted, or the student's educational establishment.

Ofsted – contact can be made as follows:

On their dedicated whistleblowing hotline – 0300 123 3155 (Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm).

By email to the whistleblowing team – whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk.

By post: WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Confidentially

All concerns, questions, requests for information, suggestions, complaints or grievances will be treated with confidentiality in mind and only staff members that have relevance to the situation will be informed. The senior team may well need to be made aware to maintain a consistent approach and to allow them the smooth running of the team. This will be assessed on each individual case.

Manager / owner sign.....

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