

Policy - Whistleblowing Policy

Title: Whistleblowing Policy

Category: Safeguarding Children

Review Date: 30th Aug 2024

Description:

It is important to Burpham Preschool that any concerns regarding safeguarding children, fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by Staff, Trustees, Volunteers or any other people involved in the Preschool, is reported and properly dealt with. The Preschool encourages all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the preschool or the way in which the preschool setting is run.

This policy is underpinned by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, encouraging concerns to be raised, in order to promote good governance and accountability in the public interest. The act details behaviour, in which concerns should be raised, which amounts to:

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with any legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- Danger to health and safety of an individual and/or environment
- Bullying, humiliation, discrimination, poor practice, unsafe practice, abuse or neglect
- Deliberate concealment of information about any of the above

It is not intended that this policy be a substitute for, or an alternative to the setting's formal complaints procedure, but to compliment it. It is designed to nurture a culture of openness and transparency within the Preschool, which makes it safe and acceptable for anyone to raise in good faith, a concern that they may have about misconduct or malpractice.

A member of staff, trustee, volunteer or anyone else involved with the Preschool, who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise concerns should normally report the matter to the Preschool manager. The Manager will advise of the action that will be taken in response to the concerns expressed.

However, reporting to the Manager may not always be appropriate, in which case the concerns should be raised with the Trustee Chairperson.

Alternatively, contact can be made directly to OFSTED (e-mail whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk or call 0845 404046) for advice on what steps to follow.

A disclosure to the Preschool Manager / Trustee Chairperson will be protected. Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible and the member of staff, trustee or volunteer will not suffer any personal detriment as a result of raising any genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice within the setting.

- Concerns should be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible. Within one week of the receipt of a concern, the complainant will receive written acknowledgment of the concern and where appropriate, with a copy of the statement.
- Although anonymous complaints may arise and are still considered, the complainant will be advised that these concerns are harder to investigate.
- Concerns should be put in writing, with as much information about the concern as possible, including background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible. The earlier the concern is raised, the easier it is to take action. If the allegation is not written the Manager / Trustee Chairperson will make a written record of the interview and will ask for a signature as confirmation on the accuracy of the notes taken.
- Although the complainant will not be expected to prove the truth about the allegation, they will be required to demonstrate that there are sufficient grounds for concern. However, the matter should not be investigated by the complainant themselves, alert those suspected of being involved, approach or accuse individuals, or tell anyone other than the designated persons (Preschool Manager / Trustee Chairperson).
- The concern will be investigated and the complainant will be informed of what action is being taken and will be kept informed on the progress of the investigation. They will also be informed of any outcomes on any investigation.
- If an allegation / concern is made in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against the complainant. If, however, an allegation proves to be malicious, action may be taken against the person responsible for the malicious act.
- If, however, the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, the concerns maybe elevated directly to OFSTED.