



## **2b Whistleblowing**

### **Policy statement**

Whistleblowing is an important aspect of safeguarding where staff, volunteers and students are encouraged to share genuine concerns about a colleague's behaviour. This may include:

- A criminal offence,
- Breach of a legal obligation,
- A miscarriage of justice,
- A danger to the health and safety of an individual,
- Damage to the environment,
- Deliberate covering up of information tending to show any of the above.

Peter Pan Pre-school strongly supports measures which protect whistleblowers from any form of victimisation and works to preserve the confidentiality of workers who raise such concerns.

## **Procedures**

Staff who believe that people they work with are behaving in a way that seems wrong or have serious concerns about an aspect of service will be doing their duty and acting in the public interest by speaking out. They can do this by using the following guidance:

- As a first step, concerns should normally be raised with the manager or the Chair Person.
- However, staff can contact the Ofsted whistleblowing hotline (0300 123 3155) if they feel that the sensitivity or seriousness of the concern requires outside support.
- Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing.
- A member of staff who wishes to make a written report is advised to set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible and the reasons for making the disclosure. This will make the investigation easier to complete.
- Although a member of staff is not expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of the allegation, they will need to demonstrate that they have an honest and reasonable suspicion that malpractice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.
- Peter Pan Pre-school will respond to any concerns raised. In order to protect a member of staff who raises a concern and those accused of wrong-doing, initial enquiries will be made by the manager (Andrea Francis) and the Chairperson to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and if so, what form it should take.
- Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation. If urgent action is required, this will be taken before any investigation is conducted. Staff will be told how a concern will be approached or investigated within ten working days of the concern being brought to attention.

## **Confidentiality**

- All concerns will be treated with confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal a staff member's identity, if they so wish. However, while making all reasonable efforts to maintain the confidentiality of the matter as a whole, at a

certain stage in the investigation it will be necessary to make the origin of the complaint known to the person or persons the allegations concern. All concerns raised within the remit of this procedure will be assessed to determine if the confidentiality extends to withholding the name of the complainant. There should be a substantial reason for doing so, such as a risk of personal harm.

- Complainants should be aware however, that their identity may be revealed by inference.

### **Untrue allegations**

- Peter Pan pre-school management accepts that deciding to report a concern can be very difficult and uncomfortable. If a member of staff makes an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against him/her. If, however, a member of staff makes an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against them.

### **Legal framework**

- The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- Children Act 1989 and 2004.
- Data Protection Act 1998.

### **Further guidance**

- Working together to safeguard children 2010 (available to download from [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk). Search for DCSF-00305-2010)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – summary and poster (available to download from [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk) search for DFES-04319-2006).
- Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Manual of child protection guidelines. (available online at <http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/index.html>).
- Ofsted – [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

Staff member	Signature confirming that staff have read and understood the policy	Date
Andrea Francis		
Emma Jameson		
Sally Kenny		
Nina Wilson		
Michelle Munden		