

Whistle Blowing Policy

Procedures

What concerns are covered?

Neatishead and Barton Pre-school expects employees who have serious concerns about any aspect of their work to voice their concerns internally, either with the Supervisor (Christine Colman) or Chair of committee (Karen Smithson), within the organisation rather than overlooking the problem.

We also wish to encourage employees to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns and malpractice.

This policy has been written to supplement, rather than replace, the existing Complaints Procedures. Concerns or allegations which fall within the scope of specific procedures, e.g. Child Protection, will normally be referred under its own procedures. This Policy is intended to cover serious concerns that fall outside other procedures and may relate to something which:

- Is against Financial Regulations and policies
- Falls below established standards of practice

Amounts to improper conduct, including something that is believed to be:

- Against the law
- A Health & Safety risk
- Damaging to the environment
- A misuse of money
- Corruption or unethical conduct
- Abuse of clients or service users

Who can an employee raise a concern with?

The employee should firstly raise their concerns with their Supervisor (Christine Colman). However if they do not feel that this is possible, they should approach the current Chair of committee (Karen Smithson).

How does an employee raise a concern?

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. Staff who wish to make a written report are 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.

To allow for staff members to write down or discuss any problems within the pre-school, we have six-weekly Staff Supervision Meetings, the information provided is discussed in confidence with the supervisor or the chair person and follow up action is taken up if necessary.

How will the concern be dealt with?

Neatishead and Barton 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 to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. Such initial enquiries have to be dealt with promptly, thoroughly, impartially and confidentially, in accordance with the Procedure.

The management team (Chair and Supervisor) or if the complaint relates to the Supervisor (Chair and other committee members), will acknowledge the concern immediately and then in writing within two weeks, giving an indication of how the concern will/or has been dealt with. If it has not been dealt with, the letter will include an indication of how long the procedure will take.

Initial Enquiries

As part of the initial enquiry, the member of the management team may meet with the employee to gather information or clarify certain details. Employees must co-operate fully with the investigation and disclose all relevant information. The member of the management team will record, in written format, all meetings.

If other employees are able/willing to substantiate the concern, they should also meet with the member of the management team dealing with the concern. If the management team believe other employees are aware, but do not feel able to come forward, then the management team should approach them reassuring them that their concerns will be treated confidentially.

Possible outcome of initial enquiries

Depending on the nature of the concern, and the evidence found, possible outcomes include:

- Unable to investigate due to anonymous report and not enough information to proceed.
- If the concern was shared but was inaccurate, no further investigation would be carried out.
- Where there is believed to be grounds for concern then further investigation will be carried out.
- Further investigations.

Dependant on the nature of the concern e.g. suspected fraud, theft, and serious malpractice etc, the management team may investigate further.

Care needs to be taken when carrying out the investigation to:

- Protect the employee(s) concerned.
- Avoid alerting anyone about whom a concern has been raised.
- Avoid alerting other employees who may then warn the subject of the concern.
- Record the information as the record may be used in a formal hearing, if it is a serious complaint.
- Keep all records secure and confidential

Untrue allegations

If an employee raises a concern in good faith, but it is subsequently confirmed by the investigation to be untrue, no action will be taken against the employee. However, if the allegation is found to have been made maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against the employee.

Links to other relevant policies:

- Safeguarding policy

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| This policy was adopted at a meeting of | _____ | name of setting |
| Held on | _____ | (date) |
| Date to be reviewed | _____ | (date) |
| Signed on behalf of the management committee | _____ | |
| Name of signatory | _____ | |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) | _____ | |