



Kingsdown Pre-school Whistleblowing Policy

Policy Statement

Kingsdown Pre-school is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability. In line with that commitment we encourage employees and others with serious concerns about any aspect of the setting, or behaviour of its employees to come forward and voice those concerns.

It is recognised that certain cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis. This policy document makes it clear that employees can do something without fear of reprisals. It is intended that this policy will encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within the setting rather than overlooking a problem or having it playing on their mind.

Staff have the right and individual responsibility to raise any matters of concern regarding poor practice at work. Staff are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of all children attending the Pre-school and this takes priority over loyalty towards colleagues.

General Principals

This policy is intended to

- Encourage and enable individuals to raise genuine and legitimate concerns
- Support staff to take an active role in the elimination of poor practice
- Ensure concerns are appropriately investigated
- Protect those making the complaint from victimisation or retaliation

In addition to this policy we have other policies and procedures covering discipline, grievance and complaints:

- Allegation Against Staff
- Child Protection
- Complaints
- Grievance
- Staff Disciplinary

This Whistleblowing policy is intended to complement these and to cover concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures.

All concerns that are raised in accordance with this policy will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the Manager and Chair of the Committee and appropriate action will be taken.

Confidentiality

Those investigating the matter will do its best to protect a person's identity when a concern is raised, however in some circumstances identities will have to be revealed to the person complained against and the complainant may be asked to provide written or verbal evidence in support of their complaint. If a person's identity is to be disclosed, he or she will be told before the disclosure and the reasons why this is necessary.

Once the concerns have been raised, we expect that the complainant will not talk about this to any other person inside or outside the setting.

Anonymous Complaint

When a concern is expressed anonymously it is much less powerful and harder to investigate. However, it will still be considered and looked at.

Untrue allegation

If an allegation 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.

How to raise a concern

In the first instance, concerns should be raised with the Manager. However, if this is not possible or the concern is about the Manager then contact should be made with the Chair of the Committee.

Concerns are best raised in writing, included in this should be the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates, places where possible and the reason why you are particularly concerned. The earlier you express your concerns the easier it is to take action. If you do not wish to put the concern in writing, the person to whom you are making the complaint will make a written record of the interview and will ask you to sign to confirm accuracy of the notes taken. Although you will not be expected to prove the truth of your concern, you will be required to demonstrate that there are sufficient grounds for your concern.

You should not

- Investigate the matter yourself
- Alert those suspected of being involved
- Approach or accuse individuals
- Tell anyone other than Manager or Chair of the Committee.

Within a week of the receipt of your concern, you will receive a written acknowledgement of your concern, with a copy of your statement where appropriate. The Manager and Chair of the Committee will investigate your concern and within 2 weeks you will be informed of what action is being taken and you will be kept up to date on the progress of the investigation. You will also be informed of the outcome of any investigation.

If the concern is a safeguarding allegation about a member of staff then you should follow the Allegation Against a member of staff policy and contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the setting Jacqui Hodgson-Pope or the deputy DSL Jeanette Thomson.

If for any reason you are unable to contact either of them you should contact the Kent County LADO on 03000 41 08 88

If the matter is urgent i.e. a child is in immediate danger and requires safeguarding you should telephone the Children Social Work Service Front Door on 03000 41 11 11 or if matter is urgent and outside of office hours you should telephone 03000 41 91 91

This policy was reviewed on 12 April 2022. It will be reviewed annually or sooner if required

Signed on behalf of the Pre-school A.Bridges
Chairperson Kingsdown Pre-school Committee