

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Whistleblowing can be defined as raising a concern about a malpractice within an organisation.

At the Oaks Nursery we are committed to delivering a high quality pre-school service, promoting organisational accountability and maintaining public confidence. We are committed to safeguarding children and adults and promoting the welfare of every child, and therefore, expect the highest possible standards of openness. To safeguard each individual child and users of our provision, reports of malpractice are taken seriously. It is the duty of every employee and volunteer to report situations of witnessed and/or suspected malpractice or misconduct. The Oaks Nursery recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of fear of reprisals from those responsible.

This policy provides individuals at The Oaks Nursery protection from victimisation or punishment where they raise a genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice in a setting or during an organised trip or outing. This also includes any action likely to bring The Oaks Nursery into disrepute. The policy is in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which encourages people to raise concerns about misconduct or malpractice in the workplace, in order to promote good governance and accountability. Such behaviour would include:

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation
- Danger to health and safety of an individual and/or environment
- Deliberate concealment of information in relation to any of the above

Procedure

- Any staff member, parent/carer, or volunteer who, acting in good faith, has a concern about misconduct or malpractice at The Oaks Nursery, should in the first instance inform the manager of their concerns. If the issue concerns the Manager then the Chair of the Committee should be informed. If it relates to the Chair then Ofsted should be contacted for advice on the number below.

- The report, written or verbal, should set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible, and the reason why there are concerns.
- In every instance it is advised to report concerns early
- Most concerns will be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- All concerns will be investigated by the Manager or Chairperson as quickly and efficiently as possible and resolved.
- The Manager will then advise the staff member, parent/carer or volunteer what action will be taken in relation to the issue raised without a breach of confidentiality
- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the staff, parent/carer or volunteer should put their concerns in writing to the Chair of the Committee.
- Confidentiality will be maintained at all times and every effort will be made to ensure the person raising the concern will not suffer any personal detriment as a result of voicing their concerns and likewise the member of staff under investigation.
- Any malicious and unfounded reports will be considered for disciplinary action.
- If an employee, parent/carer or volunteer feels that the matter cannot be dealt with either the manager or the Chairperson they should contact Ofsted direct on 0300 123 1231 for advice on what steps to take.
- All documentation will be kept securely in staff records.