

Blue Bears Playscheme

Whistle- blowing Policy

The document defines whistleblowing as:

“...someone who works in or for an organisation [who] wishes to raise concerns about malpractice, wrongdoing, illegality or risk in the organisation (for example, crimes, civil offences, miscarriages of justice, dangers to health and safety)”

The Whistleblowing Act (also known as The Public Interest Disclosure Act of 1998) encourages those working in child-centred workplaces to promote accountability and self-regulation. Where there is genuine concern about child safeguarding, the Act promotes public interest by providing a service that protects the worker who raises honest concern against reprisals from their workplace.

Differing from a personal complaint or a grievance, whistleblowing generally applies when there is no vested interest and a person is acting as a witness to misconduct or malpractice they have observed.

If you do find that you have genuine concerns regarding child safety, you should decide whether the matter is an emergency. If the danger surrounding a child is imminent, it is best to directly contact your local authority's children's services or the police straight away. It is important to remember any details that may be needed at a later date.

In the situation where the danger is less imminent, you may contact the Whistle-blower Hotline.

(0300 123 3155). They will need to know whether you have already raised your concern internally and whether there was any action taken. Once the hotline attendant has gathered as much information as possible they will forward the record onto specially trained staff to determine whether Ofsted is able to take action on your behalf.

When your concern is being dealt with by Ofsted, they will categorise into one of the following:

- **Category 1:**
child protection concerns about a 'risk of harm' to specific child or children's. Ofsted's Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement (CIE) team will immediately refer the matter to the local authority's child protection team for urgent attention.
- **Category 2:**
specific concerns or allegations about wider or systematic failure in safeguarding practice in the local authority. These will be referred to the Ofsted whistleblowing team.

There should be a transparent system in place when whistleblowing. If however you are worried about raising a concern you would be wise to seek out independent advice. This can be found through your union or through the charity Public Concern at Work.

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Responding to a concern

Initial enquiries will usually involve a meeting with the individual raising the concern, and will decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. If a concern relates to issues which fall within the scope of other policies, it will be addressed under those policies.

If the initial meeting does not resolve the concern, further investigation is required. The appropriate person will investigate the concerns thoroughly, ensuring that a written response can be provided within ten working days where feasible, or if this is not possible, giving a date by which the final response can be expected.

The response should include details of how the matter was investigated, conclusions drawn from the investigation, and who to contact if the member of staff is unhappy with the response and wishes to take the matter further.

Rights and responsibilities of the whistle-blower

All concerns will be treated in confidence and the Club will make every effort not to reveal the identity of anyone raising a concern in good faith. At the appropriate time, however, the member of staff may need to come forward as a witness.

If a member of staff raises a concern in good faith which is then not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against that person.

If the investigation concludes that the member of staff maliciously fabricated the allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against that person.

Contact information

Whistleblowing Hotline 0300- 123 -3155

Single Point of Entry (Safeguarding Children Board) Tel: 020 8379 2507
Open hrs. (Mon- Friday 9am-5pm)

Out of office hours call: 0208- 379 -1000 (select option)

Ofsted: 0300 -123 -1231

PCAW (Public Concern at Work): 0207-404- 6609:

This policy was adopted by: Blue Bears Playscheme	Date: 03/04/17
To be reviewed: 03/04/18	Signed: Virginia Lazarus