

Busy Bee Pre-School

10.12 Whistleblowing Policy

Introduction

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 was enacted to ensure a climate of greater frankness between employers and workers so that irregularities can be identified and addressed quickly and to strengthen employee rights by protecting responsible workers who blow the whistle about wrongdoings or failures in the workplace.

Aims and scope of this policy

- . This policy aims to provide avenues for you to raise concerns and receive feedback on any action taken.
- . Concerns raised under this Whistleblowing Policy should be about some that is or may be:-
 - . Unlawful or a criminal offence; or
 - . A breach of a legal obligation; or
 - . A miscarriage of justice; or mistreatment or abuse of a child or member of staff (to include students or parents helpers) for who the Pre-School has responsibility ; or
 - . In disregard or legislation governing health and safety at work; or
 - . Seeking undue favour over a contractual matter or a job application; or
 - . Amounts to improper conduct or unauthorised use of Pre-School's funds;
 - . Has led to or could lead to damage to the environment; or
 - . Deliberately covers up information tending to show any of the above.

Safeguards

Harassment or Victimisation

The Committee and senior staff of Busy Bee Pre-School recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make not least because of the fear or reprisal from those responsible for the malpractice. The Committee of Busy Bee Pre-School will take action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith. It will not tolerate any resulting harassment or victimisation (including informal or indirect pressures) and will treat this as a serious disciplinary offence which will be dealt with under the appropriate procedures.

Any investigation into an allegation of malpractice will not be influenced or be influenced by any disciplinary or redundancy procedure which already affects you.

Confidentiality

All concerns will be treated in confidence and the Committee of Busy Bee Pre-School will do its best to protect your identity if you do not want your name to be disclosed. If an investigation of a concern discloses a situation which is sufficiently serious to warrant disciplinary action or police involvement then your evidence may be important. Your name will not however be released as a possible witness until the reason for its disclosure at this stage have been fully discussed with you.

Anonymous Allegations

Whilst this policy encourages you to put your name to your allegations, concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful but they will be considered at the discretion of the Committee of Busy Bee Pre-School against the following criteria.

- . The seriousness of the issues raised;
- . The likelihood of confirming the allegations from the attributable sources;
- . The Pre-School best interests

You should also bear in mind that if you choose to raise a concern anonymously it will be more difficult for the matter to be investigated and for you to be provided with feedback.

Untrue Allegations

If you make an allegation in good faith but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no reprisals will be taken against you. If, however you make malicious or vexatious allegations disciplinary action may be taken against you.

How to raise a concern

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with your immediate manager, or if not appropriate, the Chairperson of the Pre-School Committee.

The earlier you express the concern the easier it is to take action. Although you are not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, you will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are sufficient grounds for your concern.

How Busy Bee Pre-School will respond

The action taken by Teresa Woollacott the Pre-School Manager/or the Committee will depend on the nature of the concern. After initial enquiries to assess the seriousness of the matter it may be investigated internally (employing specific procedure where these are applicable – for example in child protection or discrimination issues) or referred to the Police.

If urgent action is required in response to a concern this may well be taken before a full investigation is conducted.

Some concerns may be resolved by action agreed with you without the need for investigation or it may be that an investigation can be completed with the person or person under investigation be aware of the process.

In any event within ten working days of a concern being received, Teresa Woollacott the Pre-School Manager and/or Nichola Venn the Chairperson will write to you at your home address:-

- . Acknowledging that the concern has been received.
- . Indicating how it proposes to deal with the matter.
- . Giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response.
- . Telling you whether any initial enquiry have been made and
- . Telling you whether further investigations will take place, and if not, why not.
- . Naming an independent person to support you during any investigations.

This named independent person will make contact with you immediately, explain his/her role, deal with all the confidentiality issues, agree frequency of contact and keep you informed about the progress of the investigation and the investigating officers informed of any further issues you think are necessary. You should raise with this independent person any concerns you have about the conduct of the investigations. This independent person will take appropriate steps to support you in the workplace and at any criminal or disciplinary proceedings which may eventually result from your concern at which you are asked to give evidence.

If you wish to retain your anonymity you will need to nominate a representative to whom correspondence may be directed in order to keep you informed.

The amount of contact between investigating officers and you will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided. If necessary, further information will be sought from you.

When any meeting is arranged, you have the right, if you so wish to be accompanied by a professional representative or a friend (not necessarily connected with the Pre-School)

The Pre-School accept that you need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. Thus, subject to legal constraints, you will receive information about the outcome of any investigations and/or proceedings.

Detriment

The Pre-School is committed to ensuring that an employee who makes an allegation in good faith suffers no detriment from doing so.

How the matter can be taken further

This policy is intended to provide you with a way to raise concerns within the Pre-School. The Manager and/or the Committee of the Pre-School hope that you will be satisfied by its response. If you are not, you may wish to raise the matter outside the Pre-School with other agencies for example:-

- . Ofsted
- . Police
- . Local Safeguarding Officers
- . Health and Safety Executive
- . Solicitor and/or legal advisor
- . Relevant professional bodies or regulatory organisations
- . 'Public Concern at Work' – a registered charity

The Responsible Officer

The Chairperson of the Committee of the Pre-School has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy. The Chairperson will ensure that he/she acts lawfully to maintain records of all concerns raised under this policy and the outcomes of any investigations (but in a form that does not endanger confidentiality) and reports as necessary to the members of the Committee.

This policy links to Busy Bee Pre-School Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy

This policy was adopted by	Busy Bee Pre-School	<i>(name of provider)</i>
On	_____	<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed	_____	<i>(date)</i>
Signed on behalf of the provider	_____	
Name of signatory	_____	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Chair	
