

08 Staff, volunteers and students procedures

08.13 Whistleblowing procedure

It is important to Little Doves Christian Pre-school that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by employees, or people engaged in the organisation's business, is reported and properly dealt with. Therefore, all individuals are encouraged to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the early years pre-school or the way in which the early years pre-school is run.

Effective and honest communication is recognised to be essential if malpractice is to be effectively dealt with and the organisation's success ensured.

Whistleblowing relates to all those who work with, or within, the early years pre-school, who may from time-to-time think that they need to raise with someone in confidence certain issues relating to the organisation.

Whistleblowing is separate from the grievance procedure. If someone has a complaint about their own personal circumstances, they should use the normal grievance procedure. If they have a concern about malpractice within the organisation, then they should use the procedure outlined below.

Procedure

- Any concerns should be reported to the manager or deputy. If this is not possible, the concerns should be reported to trustee Jenny Walker (email: jennyflower0512@aol.com).
- All employees and those involved with the early years pre-school should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing within the organisation. Illegal, inappropriate or unethical conduct and anything of that nature should be watched out for and reported.
- Any wrongdoing should be watched out for and reported. Wrongdoing could include:
 - abuse of a child or vulnerable person - please also see 06.01 Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns whistleblowing section on page 7
 - a child, parent, employee or volunteer being put at risk of harm - please see 06.01 Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns whistleblowing section on page 7
 - unsafe working practices
 - a failure to comply with statutory or legal obligations
 - a criminal offence which has or is about to be committed
 - the use of unsafe equipment
 - falsification of financial records
 - bribery and/or corruption which has taken or is about to take place
 - covering up wrongdoing or malpractice
- Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation will be reported back to the person raising the concern.
- The person raising the issue will not be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training for the person raising the

concern will not be prejudiced because a legitimate concern has been raised.

- Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualifying disclosure (something that it is in the public interest to disclose) will be a disciplinary offence.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure the early years pre-school's disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
- If a malicious, vexatious or false allegation is made then this will be considered a disciplinary offence and disciplinary action will be taken.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If a person expressing a concern is told not to raise or pursue the concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, the person should not agree to remain silent. In this event they should report the matter to trustee Jenny Walker (email: jennyflower0512@aol.com).

Whistleblowing Helplines

- The NSPCC have introduced a whistleblowing helpline 0800 028 0285 for professionals who believe that:
 - their own or another employer will cover up the concern
 - they will be treated unfairly by their own employer for complaining
 - if they have already told their own employer and they have not responded
- Ofsted dedicated Whistleblowing Hotline (0300 1233155) for advice on what steps to follow. It is staffed from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A CHILD

If a child is in immediate danger, call 999.

If the child is at immediate risk of significant harm, call the Children and Families Hub on **0345 603 7627** and ask for the '**Priority line**' Out of hours: (5.30pm - 9.00am Monday - Thursday, 4.30pm-9.00am - Friday and Bank holidays) Telephone: 0345 606 1212 Email: Emergency.DutyTeamOutOfHours@essex.gov.uk

The Children and Families Hub continue to offer a consultation line for professionals providing advice and guidance. This can be accessed by calling

0345 603 7627 and asking for the 'Consultation Line'

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A MEMBER OF STAFF CONTACT

Essex County Council Children's Safeguarding Service 03330 139 797

LADO 0333 013 9797

Out of hours Social Services 0845 606 1212