

## Whistle Blowing Policy and Guidance

Ditton Church 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 its operation 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. This Whistle Blowing Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within the setting rather than overlooking a problem or blowing the whistle outside.

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 setting and this takes priority over loyalty towards colleagues.

### General principles:

The 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 that may affect the safety and wellbeing of any child within the setting.
- Ensure concerns are appropriately investigated.
- Protect those making the complaint from victimisation or retaliation.

In addition to the Whistle Blowing Policy, the setting has other policies and procedures covering discipline, grievance and complaints. This policy is intended to complement these, and to cover concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures.

The management/committee will investigate, promptly and thoroughly, all concerns raised in accordance with this policy, and will take appropriate action.

### Confidentiality

The management/committee 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 the disclosure is necessary.

Having raised the concerns the management/committee will expect the complainant not to talk about it to any other person, inside or outside the setting.

### **Anonymous complaints**

Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful and harder to investigate, however they may be considered.

### **Untrue allegations**

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 your immediate line manager. However this may not always be appropriate, in which case concerns should be raised with the management/committee. Contact details for Ross Terranova, the Management Committee chairman, can be found in the staff handbook.

Concerns are best raised in writing. You are invited to set out the background and history of the concern giving names, dates and 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 allegations 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 about your allegations, 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 the designated persons (i.e. management/committee).

Within a week of the receipt of your concern, you will receive a written acknowledgment of your concern, with a copy of your statement where appropriate.

The management/committee will investigate your concern and within 2 weeks you will be informed of what action is being taken and will be kept up to date on the progress of the investigation. You will also be informed of the outcome of any investigation. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, you may elevate your concerns directly to Ofsted ([enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) or call 0300 123 4666).

Workers who 'blow the whistle' on wrongdoing in the workplace can claim unfair dismissal if they are dismissed or victimised for doing so. An employee's dismissal (or selection for redundancy) is automatically considered 'unfair' if it is wholly or mainly for making protected disclosure.

Staff can access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection internally. 08000280285 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

Another external channel for raising concerns and accessing advice and guidance about whistleblowing is the Children’s Commissioner for England:

Tel: 020 7783 8330

Email: [info.request@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](mailto:info.request@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)

Website: [www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)).

There is also guidance and advice available from the following:

- GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>)
- The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas - 0300 123 1100) [www.acas.org.uk/advice](http://www.acas.org.uk/advice).
- The Whistleblowing Charity Protect (020 3117 2520) [www.protect-advice.org.uk](http://www.protect-advice.org.uk)

<b>This policy was adopted by</b>	Ditton Church Pre-school Management Committee
<b>Date</b>	April 2024
<b>Signed on behalf of the Management Committee</b>	.....
<b>Role of Signatory</b>	Chair of Management Committee
<b>Next Review Date</b>	April 2025