



## **6.02a Whistleblowing**

### **Rationale:**

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of the designated person i.e. the Manager, Mrs Deborah Gibson (and/or Mrs Jessica George (CEO) should concern be about either the manager, deputy manager, nursery supervisors).

You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that you would be disloyal to colleagues, or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children who are targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

**Don't think what if I'm wrong – Think what if I'm right**

### **Reasons for whistle blowing**

Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour:

- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

### **What stops people from whistle blowing?**

- Starting a chain of events which spiral
- Disrupting the work or project
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

### **How to raise concern:**

- Complete a Cause for Concern form. These are located in the staff kitchen on the notice board and place it in a sealed envelope for the attention of the Manager or the Board of Directors.
- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier the concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken.
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why.
- Bring matters of concern to the attention of Mrs Jessica George, if the concern itself is about the manager/deputy manager/ nursery supervisors.
- If your concern is about your immediate manager, or you feel you need to take it to someone out of the setting, contact the local authority's social service department.
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response – don't let matters rest.
- Ideally, you should put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can.
- A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of allegation but will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concerns.

Any staff member or volunteer who is the subject of allegations will be suspended from duty immediately (on full pay). Suspension is not a presumption of guilt. Suspension from duty allows time and space for a full investigation to take place. Suspended staff members will receive appropriate support and will be kept informed of the processes. An interview with the staff member would normally form part of the investigation process.

### **Further advice and support**

It is recognised that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. All staff involved in reporting suspicions of abuse will be supported appropriately.

Advice and support is available from your manager, directors and Local Authority.

### **Making a Referral – Police or Social Services?**

The designated person/s should consider the following definitions:

- A) Allegation is of potential abuse. **Action** refer to **Social Services**.
- B) Serious incident or crime has occurred on site. **Action** call the **Police**.

#### **A) Allegations/Information**

On receiving information, the designated person will co-ordinate the documenting of information/evidence and will in most cases make a referral to social services. In some cases, the designated person will decide that the information received does not constitute a referral to Social services. In these instances, the reasons for not making a referral will be explained to a staff member. All information received whether referred or not is kept securely in case of future relevance.

Referrals are made by telephone to the First Response Team – 0300 300 0901.

#### **B) Serious Incident/Scene of Crime**

If a serious incident or assault takes place or is alleged to have occurred on site or within the pre-school premises, the designated person would contact the police and appropriate emergency services. The area in which the incident or alleged incident took place should be treated as a scene of crime. Access to the area should be prevented to avoid the contamination or removal of potential evidence.

#### **Recording system**

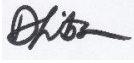
Blackberry Lane Pre-School and Nursery has a secure confidential recording system; the system is designed to ensure that there is no ambiguity in relation to where responsibility for each referral lays. Dates and times of referrals are recorded as well as the name of the social worker or person who has received information.

#### **OFSTED**

Any allegations of serious harm against or abuse of, a child by any person looking after children at an OFSTED registered setting must be reported to OFSTED. In all cases reporting locally to the local authority social services department and or the police should take priority. OFSTED should then be informed at the earliest opportunity.

**Tel: 0300 123 1231**

**Dedicated schools no: 0300 123 4234**

This policy was adopted by	Blackberry Lane Pre-School & Nursery	
On	January 2023	
Date to be reviewed	January 2024	
Signed on behalf of the provider		
Name of signatory	Mrs D Gibson	Mrs A Barnes
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Manager	Director