

General welfare requirement: Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare

The provider must take necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Safeguarding children

Whistle blowing policy

Whistle blowing means raising a concern about malpractice within an organisation.

Throughout this policy the term staff includes paid staff, volunteers and students.

Policy statement

Our whistle blowing policy aims to help and protect both staff and children to prevent a problem getting worse, safeguard children and to reduce the potential risk to others.

Jack and Jill's preschool encourage employees to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns and practice.

At Jack and Jill's we expect employees who have serious concerns about any aspect of their work to come forward and voice their concerns internally, within the organisation rather than overlooking the problem.

Jack and Jill's preschool is committed to delivering a high quality preschool service, promoting organisational accountability and maintaining public confidence.

This policy provides individuals in the workplace with protection from victimisation or punishment where they raise a genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice in the organisation. This policy is underpinned by the public interest disclosure act 1998, which encourages people to raise concerns about misconduct or malpractice in the workplace, in order to promote good governance and accountability in the public interest. The act covers behaviour which amounts to

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with any legal obligation.
- A miscarriage of justice.
- Danger to health and safety of an individual and/or environment.
- Deliberate concealment of information about any of the above.

Procedure

It is not intended that this policy be a substitute for, or an alternative to the formal grievance procedure, but it is designed to nurture a culture of openness and transparency within the organisation, which makes it safe and acceptable for staff to raise in good faith a concern they may have about misconduct or malpractice. Concerns or allegations which fall within the scope of specific procedures, e.g. child protection will normally be referred under its own procedures.

This policy is intended to cover serious concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures and may relate to something which:

- **Is against financial regulations and policies.**
- **Falls below established standards of practise.**
- **Amounts to improper conduct, including something that is believed to be:**
- **Against the law.**
- **A health and safety risk.**
- **Damaging to the environment.**
- **A misuse of money.**
- **Corruption or unethical conduct.**
- **Abuse of clients or service users.**

If staff who are acting in good faith wishes to raise a concern they should report to Rachel Butcher the preschool manager who will advise that member of staff of the action that will be taken in response to the concerns expressed. Concerns will be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible.

If any staff feels the matter cannot be discussed with the manager, they should contact the preschool committee, or Ofsted's whistle blowing hotline on 0300 1233155 (Monday to Friday 8am-6pm) or can be emailed to whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk or by post to

WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly gate, store street, Manchester, M1 2WD.

The concern can be shared verbally or put in writing but the employee needs to make sure the person they are talking to is aware they are following the whistle blowing procedure.

The person who receives the initial concern will make initial enquires to determine whether the concern raised needs further investigation. Such initial enquires should be dealt with promptly, thoroughly, impartially and confidentially, in accordance with the procedure.

The management team will acknowledge the concern in writing, within 10 days and give an indication of how the concern will/or has been dealt with. If it hasn't been dealt with then an indication of how long the procedure will take needs to be included.

As part of the initial enquiries the member of the management team may meet with the employee to gather further information or clarify certain details. Employees are expected to cooperate fully with the investigation and disclose all relevant information. The member of the management team will record, in written format, all meeting.

If other employees are/willing to substantiate the concern they should also meet with the member of the management team dealing with the concern. If the management team believe other employees are aware, but don't feel able to come forward, then the

management team should approach them and try to persuade them to share their concerns.

Depending on the nature of the concern, and the evidence found, possible outcomes include:

- Unable to investigate due to anonymous report and not enough information to proceed.
- If the concern was shared but was inaccurate no further investigation would be carried out.
- Where there is believed to be grounds for concern then further investigation will be carried out.

Dependant on the nature of the concern e.g. suspected fraud, serious malpractice etc.

The management team may investigate further.

Care needs to be taken when carrying out the investigation to:

- Protect the employee concerned.
- Avoid alerting anyone about whom a concern has been raised.
- Avoid alerting other employees who may then warn the subject of the concern.
- Record the information as the record may be used in a formal hearing, if it is a serious complaint.
- Keep all records secure and confidential.

A disclosure in good faith to the preschool manager or committee will be protected. Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible and the employee or volunteer will not suffer any personal detriment as a result of raising any genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice within the organisation.

If an employee raises a concern in good faith but is subsequently confirmed by the investigation to be untrue no action will be taken against the employee. However if the allegation is found to have been frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against the employee.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Jack and Jill's preschool

Held on

Date to be reviewed

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory

Role of signatory