

## **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Suitable People**

Providers must ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles.

## **2.6 Whistle blowing**

### **Policy statement**

This guidance is written for all employees and volunteers working at the setting.

Staff and volunteers must acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of the Pre-school Manager/Chairperson and /or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult this is particularly important where the welfare of the children may be at risk.

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

*Don't think what if I am wrong? Think what if I am 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 prevent or reduce risk to others
- To prevent yourself from becoming implicated
- To prevent illegal, inappropriate or unethical conduct

The EYFS Statutory Framework (2014) outlines examples of adult's behaviour which might be signs of abuse and neglect (section 3.6); this includes inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images. If they become aware of any such signs, staff should respond appropriately in order to safeguard the children.

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

- Starting a chain of events which spirals
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence as is the making of a malicious, vexatious or false allegation.

An instruction to cover up malpractice is also considered as a disciplinary offence and in this case, the whistle blower should not remain silent.

## **Procedures**

### *How to raise a concern*

You need to demonstrate sufficient ground for your concern and voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. A concern should not be confused with a complaint or grievance for which we have separate policies and procedures. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner it is possible for action to be taken.

- Try to pinpoint what practice is concerning you and why
- Discuss your concerns with the Pre-school Manager/Chairperson/child protection officer
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response - don't let matters rest
- Put your concerns in writing on a Confidential Incident Record form

### *People to contact*

In the first instance you should speak to the manager - if your concern is about the manager you should speak to the chairperson/child protection officer. Depending on the nature of the concern, the Pre-school Manager/Chairperson may carry out an investigation and/or make a referral to the appropriate agency in accordance with the procedures for handling allegations against staff outlined in the Child Protection Policy, for example the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01962 876364 or OFSTED 0300 123 1231

## **Legal framework**

Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

This policy was adopted by

Little Fingers Pre-school

On

\_\_\_\_\_

Date to be reviewed

March 2022

Signed on behalf of the provider

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of signatory

Carolyn Coleman

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Chair