

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

1.8 Whistleblowing

Policy statement

Cobham Community 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's operations to come forward and voice those concerns without fear of reprisals.

Staff have the right and individual responsibility to raise any matters of concern regarding poor practice at work. Staff are responsible for safety and well-being of all children attending the setting and this is priority over loyalty towards colleagues.

The policy applies to all employees and applies equally to those designated as casual, temporary or work experience and 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.
- 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.

General principles:

The public interest disclosure act 1998 protects workers who blow the whistle about wrong doing. It applies where a worker has a reasonable belief that their disclosure tends to show one or more of the following offences or breaches.

- A criminal offence
- The breach of legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- A danger to the health and safety of any individual
- Damage to the environment
- Unauthorised use of funds
- Sexual or physical abuse or
- Deliberate covering up of information tending to show any of the above.
- Failure to meet statutory requirements
- About poor practice or leadership

Therefore, any serious concerns that staff have about any aspect of service provision or the conduct of staff can be reported under the whistle blowing policy.

Procedure

- In the first instance, concerns should be raised with the Pre-School Manager, Kerry Sheppard. However this may not always be appropriate, in which case concerns should be raised with the Management Committee at cobhampreschoolcommittee@gmail.com
- Concerns are best raised in writing. Staff/volunteers are advised to set out the background and history of the concern giving names, dates and places where possible, and the reason why they are particularly concerned. The earlier concerns are expressed, the easier it is to take action. If staff/volunteers do not wish to put the allegations in writing, the person to whom they are making the complaint will make a written record of the interview and will ask them to sign to confirm accuracy of the notes taken.

- Although staff/volunteers will not be expected to prove the truth about their allegations, they will be required to demonstrate that there are sufficient grounds for their concern.
- Within a week of the receipt of a concern, staff/volunteers will receive a written acknowledgment of their concern, with a copy of their statement where appropriate.
- The management/committee will investigate all concerns and within a week will inform what action is being taken and will be kept up to date on the progress of the investigation. The complainant 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 Tel: 0300 123 4666 or the Ofsted Whistleblowing hotline 0300 1233155 or whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk.
- You can also contact NSPCC National Whistleblowing advice line on 0808 800 5000

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, or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against the person responsible for the malicious act.

You should not:

- Investigate the matter yourself
- Alert the suspected about the investigation
- Approach or accuse any individuals
- Discuss with anyone other than the preschool Manager or Management Committee representative
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Legal framework

Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, commonly referred to as the ‘whistleblowing act’

This policy was adopted by	Cobham Community Pre-School	<i>(name of provider)</i>
On	December 2023	<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed	December 2024	<i>(date)</i>
Signed on behalf of the provider		
Name of signatory	Kate Rose	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Chairperson	

