



Whistleblowing

Introduction

Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within the nursery. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or the nursery. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances it may feel easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice.

We are committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity, and accountability.

We expect employees, who have serious concerns regarding any aspect of the setting to raise those concerns.

We understand that the staff member may want to do this confidentially and avoid their identity being disclosed.

The code makes it clear that employees may do so without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination, or disadvantage.

The code is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise any serious concerns if needed.

Aims and Scope

Aims for employees:

- Encourage you to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon any concerns.
- Provide a way for you to raise those concerns and to be told of any action taken.
- Ensure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue them if you are not satisfied.
- Reassure you that you will be protected from possible reprisal or victimisation if you have a reasonable belief that you have made any disclosure in good faith.

This Code is intended to deal with concerns not coming within the Employee Complaints Procedure, for example:

- Conduct that is an offence or a breach of law.
- Disclosures related to miscarriages of justice.
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees.
- The unauthorised use of nursery funds.
- Abuse of children in any form.
- Other unethical conduct.

Safeguards

We are committed to good practice and high standards and wants to be supportive of employees.

We recognise that the decision to report a concern may be a difficult one to make.

If what you are saying is true, you have nothing to fear because you will be doing your duty to your employer and those for whom you are providing a service.

We will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

A concern reported under this Code will be treated confidentially. Unless you agree, the member of management dealing with your concern will not disclose your identity.

In the event of a concern disclosing alleged criminal activity, you may be asked to help the police or other appropriate enforcement agency. In the event of disciplinary action taken by the nursery you may be asked to give evidence under the disciplinary procedure.

Anonymous Allegations

This Code encourages you to put your name to your allegations whenever possible.

Concerns expressed anonymously will be considered at the discretion of the management.

In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account include:

- The seriousness of the issues raised.
- The credibility of the concern.

- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

Untrue Allegation

If an allegation is made in good faith, but is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you.

If, however, you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

How to raise a concern

You should normally raise initial concerns with a member of management. This depends on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issue and who is suspected of the malpractice. For example, if you believe that your deputy manager may be involved, you should approach the manager.

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. employees who wish to make a written report are invited to use the following format:

- The background and history of the concern (giving relevant dates and times).
- The reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation. The earlier you express the concern the easier it is to act.

Although you are not expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of an allegation, you will need to demonstrate that there are reasonable grounds for your concern.

How the nursery will respond

The nursery will respond to your concerns.

Initially all concerns raised under this Code will be referred to the nursery manager, who will determine whether the matters raised should:

- Be referred to the LADO.
- Be investigated by management, Internal Audit, or through the disciplinary process.
- Be referred to the police.
- From the subject of an independent inquiry.

To protect individuals and those accused of misdeeds or possible malpractice, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. Concerns or allegations, which fall within the scope of specific procedures (for example, child protection or discrimination issues), will normally be referred for consideration under those procedures.

Some concerns may be resolved by nursery action without the need for investigation.

If urgent action is required, this will be taken before any investigation is conducted.

Within ten working days of a concern being referred manager, we will write to you:

- Acknowledging that the concern has been received.
- Indicating how the matter is to be dealt with.
- Giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response, telling you whether any initial enquiries have been made.

The nursery accepts that you need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. The manager, subject to any legal constraints, will inform you of the outcome of any investigation.

How the matter can be taken further

If the matter is taken outside the nursery, ensure that you do not disclose confidential information to any person who is not authorised to receive it.

An untrue allegation that a person has committed a criminal offence may be defamatory. Concerns raised within the nursery under this Code will normally be protected by qualified privilege as a defence to defamation proceedings unless made maliciously.

Contact telephone numbers:

Bradford Children's Services integrated front door - 01274 433999

Email: TBPsafeguardingchildren@bradford.gov.uk

Emergency out of hours team - 01274 431010

General contact point (IFD) - 01274433999

Local authority Designated Officer (LADO) - 01274 435600

Ofsted - 0300 123 4666

Non-emergency police - 101

Emergency police – 999

This policy was adapted on:	Signed on behalf of the nursery:	Date for review
April 2021	Claire Smith	April 2022
April 22	Vicky Sheard	April 2023
May 2023	Vicky Sheard	May 2024
January 2024	Rebecca Barron	January 2024
January 2025	Rebecca Barron	January 2026
March 2026	Zoe Goodchild	March 2027
April 2026	Vicky Sheard	April 2027 (added info)
May 2026	Rachel Strong	May 2027