

SAFEGUARDING & WELFARE REQUIREMENT: INFORMATION & RECORDS

10.11 Whistle-blowing



Introduction

Whistle-blowing relates to all those who work with, or within, St John's Playtime Pre-school, who may from time-to-time think that they need to raise with someone in confidence certain issues relating to malpractice within the pre-school (for example, crimes, civil offences, dangers to health and safety) and the cover up of any of these issues.

(Whistle-blowing is separate from the grievance procedure. If you have a complaint about your own personal circumstances, you should follow the normal grievance procedure).

Policy Statement

It is important to St John's Playtime Pre-school that any misconduct, wrongdoing or fraud by employees, or other people engaged in the pre-school's business, whether they are paid unpaid, volunteers, casual, agency or anyone self-employed, is reported and properly dealt with. We therefore encourage all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the pre-school or the way in which the pre-school is run.

St John's Playtime Pre-school recognises that effective and honest communication is essential if malpractice is to be effectively dealt with and the needs of the pre-school and the safety of all our children maintained.

Procedures

- All employees and those involved with the pre-school should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing within the pre-school. You should be watchful for illegal, inappropriate or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature you become aware of. This could include:
 - Abuse of a child or vulnerable person
 - A child, parent, employee or volunteer being put at risk of harm
 - Unsafe working practices
 - A failure to comply with statutory or legal obligations
 - A criminal offence which has or is about to be committed
 - The use of unsafe equipment
 - Falsification of financial records

- Bribery and/or corruption which has taken or is about to take place
 - A violation of the code of conduct
 - Covering up wrongdoing or malpractice
- Any concerns should be reported to the pre-school Manager or Committee Chairperson.
 - Any matters reported to the Manager or Committee Chairperson will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation will be reported back to you.
 - The Manager or Chairperson **must** report any allegations made to the Local Authority Designated Officer- **LADO**, who will provide advice and consultation. Where a referral will need to be made within 24 hours.
 - You will not be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that your continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training will not be prejudiced because you have raised a legitimate concern.
 - Victimisation of an individual for raising a concern will be a disciplinary offence.
 - If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure the Pre-school's disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
 - If you make a malicious, vexatious or a false allegation then this will be considered to be a disciplinary offence and disciplinary action will be taken against you.
 - An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If you are told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, you should not agree to remain silent. In this event you should report the matter to the Committee Chairperson.
 - Who should contact the **LADO- Local Designated Officers** – can be contacted via email on LADO@suffolk.gov.uk or using the LADO central line **0300 123 2044**

The LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)

- The **LADO must** be contacted within one working day in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they pose a risk of harm to children.
 - Transferable Risk: This can be in relation to, e.g. actions in a person's private life where they have behaved in a way which indicates they pose a risk of harm to children.

- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

There may be up to three strands in the consideration of an allegation

- Enquires and assessment by Children and Young People's Services about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services.
- A police investigation of possible criminal offence.
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

The LADO is responsible for:

- Providing advice, information and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations around allegations and concerns regarding paid and unpaid workers and recommending a referral as appropriate.
- Guidance to employers and voluntary organisations of their role to ensuring alleged adults have access to a fair and thorough process with consistent support.
- Recommendations on progressing referrals and chairing a strategy meeting where necessary.
- Managing and overseeing individual cases from partner agencies.
- Ensuring the child's voice is heard and that they are safeguarded.
- Monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible.

The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case and working closely with other agencies, employing organisations and voluntary organisations.

Please also see Safeguarding Partnership Procedures- 'Arrangements for Managing Allegations of Abuse against People who works with Children or in a Position of Trust' on the Lado Page, which can be accessed <https://www.suffolksp.org.uk/local-authority-designated-officers-lado>

- The Incident **must** also be reported to **OFSTED- using the online notification form- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/childcare-providers-telling-ofsted-about-significant-events>**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility if you feel that you can not report to the pre-school Manager, Designated Safeguarding Leads or Chairperson, you can contact the LADO directly yourself.

This policy was adopted at a meeting held by St John's Playtime Pre-school committee on 21st March 2017.

This policy was reviewed & updated on: May 2024 (This policy was edited and updated 1st December 2023)

This policy will be reviewed again on: May 2025

Signed on behalf of the Management committee and provider:

Name of Signatory: Julia Rael



Role of Signatory: Committee Chairperson