



Whistle blowing policy

Market Rasen preschool is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability. In line with that commitment we encourage employees and others with concerns about any aspect of the settings operations to come forward and voice those concerns. All our staff have a right and a responsibility to raise any matters of concern regarding poor and ineffective practice at work or any inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. This includes situations where a member of staff becomes aware that a colleague has failed to execute their duty to safeguard children within the setting or elsewhere.

Staff are responsible for the safety and well-being of all children attending the setting and this is a priority over loyalty towards colleagues. All concerns will be responded to and dealt with in accordance with the settings confidentiality policy.

General principles

This policy should;

- *Encourage and enable individuals to raise genuine and legitimate concerns without fear of reprisals*
- *Support staff to take an active role in the elimination of poor practice that may affect the safety and well-being of any child within the setting*
- *Ensure concerns are appropriately investigated*
- *Protect those making the complaint from victimisation or retaliation*

In addition to this policy, the setting has other policies and procedures covering discipline, grievance and complaints. This policy is intended to compliment these and to cover concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures.

The manager/owner will investigate all concerns promptly and thoroughly in accordance with this policy and take appropriate action.

Confidentiality

The manager/owner will do their 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 complainant must not 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; this does not mean that they will be considered.

Malicious complaints

In an allegation is made in good faith but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against the complainant. However; if the aggregation proves to be malicious, action may be taken against the person responsible for the malicious act.

How to raise a concern

In the first instance concerns should be raised with the immediate line manager. However this may not always be appropriate, in which case concerns should be raised with the owner.

Concerns are best raised in writing. The complainant should set out the background and history of the situation, giving names, dates and places where possible, and the reason for the concern. The earlier that concerns are raised the easier it is to take action. If it is not possible to put the allegations in writing, the person to whom you are making the complaint will make a written record of the conversation and will ask the complainant to sign the accuracy of the notes taken.

Although the complainant will not be expected to prove the truth of the allegations, it will be necessary to demonstrate that there are sufficient grounds for concern

The complainant should not;

- Investigate the matter themselves
- Alert those suspected of being involved
- Approach or accuse individuals
- Tell anyone other than the designated persons (manager/owner)

The complainant will receive a written acknowledgement of their concern along with a copy of their statement within a week of raising the concern.

Investigations

Depending on the nature of the complaint the management/ owner will either investigate or elevate concerns to appropriate agencies. Where a safeguarding allegation is made against a member of staff the procedure for allegations against a member of staff within our safeguarding children procedure will be followed.

At the end of the investigation the complainant will be informed with regards to whether the complainant had been upheld or not.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Referrals

Where an allegation or concern 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;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or

Referrals should be made to LADO. This procedure applies when an allegation or suspicion arises within an individual's own work, with his or her own children, with other children living outside the family and historical allegations.

To make a referral or discuss concerns please ring 01522 554674 where a LADO officer will be available or a message can be left so we can call you back within 24hrs. Alternatively you can make a referral using the LADO Referral Form on the LSCB website. <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lscb/the-lscb/contact-us/124619.article>

