

Subject: Confidential Reporting

Introduction

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 aims to protect "whistleblowers" from victimisation and dismissal where they have genuine concerns about a range of misconduct and malpractice.

Smisby Day Nursery Limited is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment employees and others who have serious concerns about any aspect of the organisation's work are expected to come forward and voice these concerns.

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

This policy makes it clear that employees can raise serious concerns without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage and is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise these concerns within the organisation.

The policy applies to all employees of Smisby Day Nursery and those providing services under a contract with Smisby Day Nursery.

The policy aims to:

- Encourage employees and others to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practices of Smisby Day Nursery
- Provide avenues for employees and others to raise these concerns and receive feedback on any action taken
- Ensure that employees and others receive a response to concerns and made aware of how to pursue the concerns if not satisfied with the initial response
- Reassure employees and others that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if they have a reasonable belief that any disclosure has been made in good faith

The Policy is intended to cover major concerns including:

- Conduct which is an offence or a breach of law
- Disclosure related to miscarriages of justice
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees
- Damages to the environment
- Possible fraud and corruption
- Sexual, physical or emotional abuse of staff or children
- Other unethical conduct

Thus any concerns about any aspect of service provision or the conduct of officers or members of Smisby Day Nursery or others on behalf of the organisation can be reported under the Confidential Reporting Policy. This may be about something that:

- Makes an employee feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards and experience on the standards that the Nursery subscribes to
- Is against the organisation's Standing Orders and policies
- Falls below established standards of practice
- Amounts to improper conduct

Safeguards

Harassment or victimisation

Smisby Day Nursery is committed to good practice and high standards and to be supportive of employees.

Smisby Day Nursery recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. If what an employee is saying is true, they should have nothing to fear because they will be doing their duty to Ofsted, their employer and those for whom they are providing a service.

Smisby Day Nursery will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect an employee who raises a concern in good faith.

Confidentiality

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal the identity of the person reporting the concern. At the appropriate time, i.e. if and when the matter goes to an investigatory stage and a disciplinary hearing, however, the employee may need to come forward as a witness.

Anonymous Allegations

This Policy encourages an employee to put their name to an allegation where possible. Concerns expressed anonymously will be considered at the discretion of the Organisation with reference to the seriousness of the issues raised, the credibility of the concern, and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

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 employee. If however, an allegation is made maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against the employee.

How to raise a concern

Smisby Day Nursery will designate an impartial and independent officer to be the point of contact for concerns raised under the whistle blowing procedure. Should the contact not be available for a number of days then you are encouraged to contact the alternative independent contact if the matter is of an urgent nature. The Directors will review these contacts on an annual basis.

Independent Contact:	
Telephone:	

Alternative Independent Contact:	
Telephone:	