



The Goslings Preschool

Registered Charity No. 1209514

Whistleblowing Policy

At The Goslings Preschool it is essential that all children, staff and parents feel safe, and that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by employees, or people engaged in the organisation's business, 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 early years setting, or the way in which the early years setting is run.

We recognise that effective and honest communication is essential if malpractice is to be effectively dealt with and the organisation's success ensured.

Whistleblowing relates to all those who work with, or within, the early years setting, who may from time-to-time think that they need to raise with someone in confidence certain issues relating to the organisation. Whistleblowing is separate from the grievance procedure. If you have a complaint about your own personal circumstances, you should use the normal grievance procedure. If you have a concern about malpractice within the organisation, then you should use the procedure outlined below.

Procedure

- If any adult suspects that a member of the preschool staff has been involved in any form of abuse involving a child and decides to whistle blow the situation, that is their right and their duty. These suspicions should be reported in the first instance to the designated person for child protection within the setting/Preschool Manager. If the concern was to involve that person, the matter should be raised with the committee's safeguarding officer/Chairperson in the strictest confidence.
- Staff may choose not to express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues; therefore, the whistleblowing policy is in place to provide anonymity.
- All staff and those involved with the setting should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing within it. Concerns that should be raised via the whistleblowing policy may be in relation to the actions/behaviours of other staff, students or volunteers, or about something that is perceived as unlawful, failing to comply with the setting's policies and procedures, unethical practice, poor practice and/or improper conduct.
- Staff should be watchful and report any wrongdoing. Wrongdoing 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.
 - Covering up wrongdoing or malpractice.

- Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation will be reported back to the whistleblower.
- Staff will not be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that their continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training will not be prejudiced because they have raised a legitimate concern.
- Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualifying disclosure (something that it is in the public interest to disclose) will be a disciplinary offence.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure, the setting's disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
- If a malicious, vexatious or false allegation is made then this will be considered a disciplinary offence and disciplinary action will be taken.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If a member of staff is told not to raise or to pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, they should not agree to remain silent. In this event they should report the matter to the Chairperson.
- If the whistleblower feels unable to speak with either the Preschool Manager or Chairperson, they should raise their concerns directly with the LADO themselves on:

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
Tel.: 01606 288931 / 01270 685904
Email: LADO@cheshireeast.gov.uk

LADO's opening hours are 9.00am – 5.30pm Monday to Thursday and 9.00am – 4.30pm on Friday.

- Any issues regarding but not limited to theft or inappropriate and/or threatening behaviours should also follow the whistleblowing policy.

Actions

- The staff member accused will be informed of the allegation and removed from the setting, pending further investigation.
- LADO will be informed, and their protocol will be followed. Ofsted will also be notified.
- Support will be offered to the staff member; however the children remain our priority.
- Records will be kept of the allegation and of further proceedings. These will remain confidential under safeguarding guidelines.

This Policy has been reviewed and agreed by The Goslings Management Team and Parental Committee.