## **WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY**

People responsible for Whistle Blowing: Jess Hammond and Lisa Gray

**Whistle Blowing Advice Line for Professionals: 0800 028 0285**

The safety of children is our paramount objective and we encourage all adults in our setting to disclose information that suggests a child may be at risk at the earliest opportunity.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 provides protection for employees who raise legitimate concerns, this includes a reasonable belief that:

* A criminal offence
* A miscarriage of justice
* An act creating risk to health and safety
* An act causing damage to the environment
* A breech of any legal obligation
* Concealment of any of the above
* Any other unethical conduct
* An act that may be deemed as radicalised or a threat to national security is being, has been, or is likely to be committed.

Practitioners must believe a disclosure to be substantially true, not make malicious or false allegations, nor make a disclosure to seek personal gain. It is not necessary to have proof that such an act has been, or is likely to be, committed; a reasonable belief is sufficient. Failure to report serious matters may be investigated and potentially lead to disciplinary action, including the possibility of dismissal.

**PROCEDURE FOR MAKING A DISCLOSURE**

* Safeguarding policies to be followed where the information relates to child protection/safeguarding.
* Initially employees should speak to Jess H or Lisa to discuss their concerns. If they feel that this may be inappropriate, e.g. because the disclosure relates to Jess/Lisa, or they are away from the setting and uncontactable, the disclosure can be discussed with any other member of management (including section leaders, deputy manager, manager or managing directors).
* The person making the disclosure will suffer no detriment for making a disclosure in line with this procedure.
* Any disclosures received with be treated seriously and dealt with confidentially.
* Any employee who is involved in victimising employees, who makes a malicious or false disclosure will be subject to disciplinary action, which may result in dismissal.
* Any member of management who inappropriately deals with a whistle-blowing disclosure will be subject to disciplinary action, which may result in dismissal.
* Contact numbers for Ofsted, SPOA, the whistle blowing helpline and any others as deemed appropriate will be easily accessible for staff. They are currently displayed in the hallway, kitchen and safeguarding noticeboard.
* If the member of staff is not satisfied their concern has been handled in an appropriate manner, they can call the Whistle Blowing Helpline (details above), all calls will be treated in confidence.

Policy revised December 2021 Lisa Gray