

Whistleblowing Policy

Policy Statement

At Katey's House Nursery, we recognise that employees are often the first to identify potential issues within the setting. However, concerns may go unreported due to fears of disloyalty, harassment, or victimisation. Despite these fears, all employees have a legal responsibility to report concerns to ensure the safety and respect of children, families, visitors, and colleagues. We are committed to the highest standards of openness and accountability, encouraging employees and others with genuine concerns to voice them without fear of reprisal.

Aims

- Encourage confidence in raising serious concerns and addressing questionable practices
- Provide avenues for raising concerns and receiving feedback on actions taken
- Ensure responses to concerns and inform employees on how to pursue issues if not satisfied
- Reassure protection from reprisals or victimisation when concerns are raised in good faith

Policy Coverage

The whistleblowing policy covers significant concerns outside the scope of other procedures, including:

- Conduct that is illegal or a breach of law
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public and employees
- Environmental damage
- Unauthorised use of company funds
- Fraud, corruption, and unethical conduct
- Physical or sexual abuse of adults and children
- Other misconduct or unethical behaviour

Safeguards

Harassment or Victimisation

Katey's House Nursery does not tolerate any form of harassment or victimisation of employees raising concerns in good faith. Appropriate actions will be taken to protect individuals who report concerns.

Confidentiality

At the Nursery we will do our best to protect someone's identity when they raise a concern. However, it must be appreciated that any investigation process may reveal

the source of the information and a statement by you may be required as part of the evidence.

If you would like to speak to someone during this time or need further support you can ask to be assigned a mentor, this will be someone employed by the company but at another nursery or speak with the person that you notified your concerns to. It is important that you only speak to an appropriate person and not to other staff members, families using the nursery or friends and family at home as this is not appropriate and a breach of confidentiality and could lead to formal proceedings being taken against you.

Failure to report serious matters can also be investigated and potentially lead to disciplinary action which may result in dismissal.

Anonymous Allegations

Anonymous reports will be considered based on:

- The seriousness of the issue
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources

Untrue Allegations

If an allegation made in good faith is not confirmed, no action will be taken against the employee. However, malicious or frivolous allegations may result in disciplinary action.

Raising a Concern

Concerns should typically be raised with a Nursery DSL. If the issue involves management, contact the Company CEO, Sinead Johnson. Concerns can be raised verbally or in writing and should include relevant details and reasons for concern. Early reporting is crucial for effective action.

Company Whistleblowing flowchart (Appendix 1) will be displayed in every children's classroom.

Contact Information

Sinead Johnson, CEO: 07534 799850

Employees can seek advice from union representatives and may bring a colleague or union representative to any related meetings.

Response to Concerns

The response will depend on the nature of the concern and may include:

- Internal investigations
- Referral to OFSTED
- Referral to Social Services for safeguarding issues

Within ten working days of raising a concern, the staff member will receive:

- Acknowledgment of the concern
- Information on how the matter will be handled
- An estimated timeline for a final response
- Information on initial inquiries and further investigations if necessary

Disclosure of Information

Employees must report any information suggesting:

- Criminal offenses
- Non-compliance with legal obligations
- Miscarriages of justice
- Health and safety risks
- Environmental damage
- Improper conduct by anyone associated with the nursery

Confidential Support

During the investigation process, confidentiality is paramount. Employees should discuss concerns only with appropriate persons to avoid breaches of confidentiality.

Consequences of Misconduct

Victimisation of whistleblowers, deterring disclosures, or handling whistleblowing issues inappropriately will result in disciplinary action, potentially leading to dismissal.

Failure to report serious matters can also lead to investigation and disciplinary action.

This policy ensures that all disclosures are taken seriously, treated confidentially, and addressed thoroughly to maintain a safe and ethical working environment at Katey's House Nursery.

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Whistleblowing flowchart

Policy Date	19/09/2024	Approved by	Sinead Johnson CEO	Date of next review	19/09/2025
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