

Whistle Blowing Policy

INTRODUCTION

The staff and committee of Dilton Marsh Pre-school seek to run all aspects of pre-school business and activity with full regard for high standards of conduct and integrity. In the event that members of staff, parents, carers or the school community at large become aware of activities which give cause for concern, Dilton Marsh Pre-School has established the following whistle blowing policy, or code of practice, which acts as a framework to allow concerns to be raised confidentially and provides for a thorough and appropriate investigation of the matter to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion.

Dilton Marsh Pre-school is committed to tackling fraud and other forms of malpractice and treats these issues seriously.

Dilton Marsh Pre-School is committed to creating a climate of trust and openness so that a person who has a genuine concern or suspicion can raise the matter with full confidence that the matter will be appropriately considered and resolved.

The procedure requires all employees to act responsibly to uphold the reputation of the school and to help maintain public confidence.

It is a procedure in which the management committee will be expected to act swiftly and constructively in the investigation of any concerns in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedure.

This Whistle Blowing Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns **within** the setting rather than overlooking a problem or blowing the whistle outside, however if the issue is not dealt with then outside agencies should be alerted ie: Wiltshire Local Authority/LADO or OFSTED. Once the concern has been addressed and all parties concerned are happy then a strict policy of confidentiality must apply to all parties concerned.

Concern about a colleague's professional capability should not be dealt with using this procedure.

When might the whistle blowing policy apply:

Staff have the right and individual responsibility to raise any matters of concern regarding poor practice at work.

Staff are responsible for safety and well being of all children attending the setting and this is priority over loyalty towards colleagues and parents.

General principles:

The policy is intended to;

- Encourage and enable individuals to raise genuine and legitimate concerns.
- Support staff to take an active role in the elimination of poor practice.
- Ensure concerns are appropriately investigated.
- Protect those making the complaint from victimisation or retaliation.

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

The management committee will investigate, promptly and thoroughly, all concerns raised in accordance with this policy, and will take appropriate action.

Confidentiality

The management will do its 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 management will expect the complainant not to 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 they may be considered.

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 complainant. If, however, an allegation 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 your immediate line manager.

Concerns are best raised in writing. You are invited to set out the background and history of the concern giving names (staff names will be used however names of specific children will not), dates and places where possible, and the reason why you are particularly concerned. The earlier you express your concerns the easier it is to take action. If you do not wish to put the allegations in writing, the person to whom you are making the complaint will make a written record of the interview and will ask you to sign to confirm accuracy of the notes taken.

Although you will not be expected to prove the truth about your allegations, you will be required to demonstrate that there are sufficient grounds for your concern.

You should NOT:

- Investigate the matter yourself.
- Accuse individuals.
- Tell anyone other than the designated persons (i.e. management).

Within a week of the receipt of your concern, you will receive a written acknowledgment of our concern, with a copy of your statement where appropriate.

The management committee will investigate your concern and within 2 weeks you will be informed of what action is being taken and will be kept up to date on the progress of the investigation. You will also be informed of the outcome of any investigation. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, you may elevate your concerns directly to the appropriate person within the Wiltshire Local Authority or to Ofsted.

Tel: 0300 1233155, email whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk, LADO 01225 773500 or emergency number 08456070888.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the pre-school held on (date).....

Signed on behalf of the pre-school.....