

# Uplyme Preschool

## WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### Statement of intent

Uplyme preschool is committed to tackling malpractice and wrongdoing. It is our intention that staff, volunteers and students working at Uplyme Pre-school feel confident about coming forward and reporting any issues /concerns that they may have regarding the areas documented below, whilst remaining protected from any subsequent discrimination.

### Aim

- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities and feel confident in raising and reporting a serious concern at the earliest opportunity
- Provide avenues for staff to raise concerns and receive feedback on any action taken
- Ensure that staff receive a response to their concerns and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied
- Reassure staff that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if they have made any disclosures in good faith

Any concerns can be reported without this leading to any harassment or victimisation, and every effort will be made to keep both the concern and the member of staff's identity confidential.

### What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the term used when someone who works with or for an organisation, wishes to raise concerns about wrongdoing in the organisation (for example, crimes, civil offences, miscarriages of justice, dangers to health and safety or the environment), and the cover up of any of these. Whistleblowing is very different from a complaint or a grievance. It only applies when you have no vested interest and are acting as a witness to misconduct or malpractice.

A complaint is more personal in that in most circumstances you or someone close to you, will have been affected by the issue concerned and you are seeking redress or justice for yourself. In these circumstances, because you have an interest in the outcome of the complaint, you would be expected to be able to prove your case.

A grievance is when an employee has a dispute about their own employment position. If you are an employee with a grievance, we recommend that you refer to your local procedures.

### What should be reported?

- The inappropriate treatment or care of a child
- Any breach in the behaviour of manager, staff, student or volunteer
- Discrimination of any kind
- Concerns that could impact on the health and safety of the children or adults
- Inappropriate use of the setting's personal assets
- Decision making for personal gain
- Abuse of position
- Inappropriate use of the budget
- Deceit
- Tampering with documents

## Methods

- A concern can be initially raised by any staff member to their Play leader and/or the Manager or Committee chair or Ofsted
- Discuss the nature of the concern together with the background, history of the concern and provide the relevant dates of incidents
- There is no expectation that staff prove beyond doubt the truth of their suspicion; however, they will need to demonstrate that they are acting in good faith and there are reasonable grounds for their concern
- All employees will be treated fairly

## Concerns will be dealt with in the following way:

- Initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and if so what form it should take
- The incident will be investigated by the Play leader and/or the Manager, LADO, Committee and/or Ofsted
- If appropriate it will be referred and put through established Safeguarding children's procedures and may form the subject of an independent inquiry

Within ten working days of a concern being raised, the member of staff will receive in writing:

- Acknowledgment that the concern has been received and how the setting will proceed to deal with the matter
- An indication as to how the Pre-school Learning Alliance will proceed to deal with the matter
- Supply the member of staff with information on staff support mechanisms
- Inform the member of staff concerned as to whether any further investigation will take place and if not, why not

## Who to contact

To raise concerns about failures in practices and procedures for the safeguarding of children in early years settings in Devon, the member of staff, volunteer or student should contact.

- LADO – 01392 384964
- MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) 0345 155 1071. Email [mashsecure@devon.gov.uk](mailto:mashsecure@devon.gov.uk)
- Ofsted – Whistleblowing hotline – 0300 123 4666 (Monday – Friday from 8am to 6pm). Email [cie@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:cie@ofsted.gov.uk). By post to WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street. Manchester. M1 2WD.
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/fighting-for-childhood/news-opinion/new-whistleblowing-advice-line-professionals/>

The hotline can be used by anybody who has a whistleblowing concern about services or practice in any local authority, or in a care or educational setting regulated and inspected by Ofsted.

It may be necessary for the setting to interview staff to ensure that their disclosure is fully understood. Any meeting can be arranged away from the workplace, if so wished, and a representative or a friend may accompany the involved member of staff for support.

If there are any difficulties experienced as a result of raising a concern, support will be offered.

Staff will be kept informed, of the progress and outcome of any investigation to assure that any disclosure has been properly addressed unless legal reasons determine otherwise.

Confidentiality will be maintained and every effort will be made not to reveal a member of staff's identity if they so wish. If however a member of staff makes an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, appropriate action, that could include disciplinary action, may be taken.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 seeks to protect employees from discrimination as a result of 'blowing the whistle' on their organisation, or individuals within it, through amendments to employment law.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, you may elevate your concerns directly to Ofsted. 0345 155 1071 or email: [cie@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:cie@ofsted.gov.uk).

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Uplyme Preschool	
Held on	<u>21<sup>st</sup> March 2022</u>	(date)
Date to be reviewed	<u>March 2023</u>	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	<u>Kayleigh Beddows</u>	CHAIR
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