



Whistle Blowing Policy and Guidance

Bearhugs Nurseries Ltd. is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability. In line with that commitment we encourage employees and others with serious concerns about any aspect of the settings, operations to come forward and voice those concerns. It is recognised that certain cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis. This policy document makes it clear that employees can do something without fear of reprisals. 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.

Staff have the right and individual responsibility to raise any matters of concern regarding poor practice at work. Staff are responsible for safety and wellbeing of all children attending the setting and this is priority over loyalty towards colleagues.

General Principles:

This 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 that may affect the safety and wellbeing of any child within the setting.
- Ensure concerns are appropriately investigated.
- Protect those making the complaint from victimisation or retaliation.

In addition to the Whistle Blowing Policy, Bearhugs Nurseries Ltd. 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.

Management 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 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 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. However this may not always be appropriate, in which case concern should be raised with management.

Concerns are best raised in writing. You are invited to set out the background and history of the concern giving names, 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 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.
- Alert those suspected of being involved.
- Approach or accuse individuals.
- Tell anyone other than the designated persons (ie. management).

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

The management/owner 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 investigate. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, you may elevate your concerns directly to Ofsted and/or LADDO depending on the nature of the concern.

Ofsted can e contacted by phone- 0300 123 1231

Or written complaint can be sent to:

Ofsted, The national Complaints Team, Ofsted National Business Unit, Piccadilly gate, Store street, Manchester M1 2WD

To report a safeguarding concern call Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Board on Tel: 01522 782111, out of hours 01522 782333

Signed on behalf of Bearhugs Nurseries Ltd by:

Manager/Owner

Date: 1st May 2020

Review Date: 1st May 2021