



06.02 Whistleblowing

Policy statement

It is important to Westbrook Little People that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by employees, or people engaged in the organisation's business, is reported and properly dealt with. We therefore encourage all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the early years setting or the way in which the early years setting is run.

Procedures

We recognise that effective and honest communication is essential if malpractice is to be effectively dealt with. Whistleblowing relates to all those who work with, or within the early years setting, who may from time-to-time think that they need to raise with someone in confidence certain issues relating to Westbrook Little People.

- All staff and those involved in Westbrook Little People are aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing which could include
 - Abuse of a child or vulnerable person
 - A child, parent, employee or volunteer being put at risk of harm.
 - Unsafe working practices.
 - A failure to comply with statutory or legal obligations.
 - A criminal offence which has or about to be committed.
 - The use of unsafe equipment.
 - Falsification of financial records.
 - Bribery and/or corruption which has taken place or about to take place.
 - Covering up wrongdoing or malpractice.

Confidentiality – Westbrook Little People will treat all such disclosures in a confidential and sensitive manner. The identity of the individual making the allegation may be kept confidential so long as it does not hinder or frustrate any investigation.

Procedures for Making a Disclosure

On receipt of a complaint of malpractice, the member of staff who receives and takes note of the complaint, must pass this information as soon as is reasonably possible, to the appropriate designated investigating officer as follows:

- Complaints of malpractice will be investigated by an appropriate member of management, if the complaint is against any of the management or is in any way related to the actions of the Management. In such cases, the complaint should be passed to the Chairperson for referral.
- In the case of a complaint, which is any way connected with but not against the Manager, the Chair person will nominate a Senior Manager or external party to act as the alternative investigating officer.
- Complaints against the Management team should be passed to the Chair person who will carry out an investigation with the support of the committee.
- The member of Westbrook Little People has the right to bypass the line management structure and take their complaint direct to the Chairperson. The Chairperson has the right to refer the complaint back to management if he/she feels that the management without any conflict of interest can more appropriately investigate the complaint.

Should none of the above routes be suitable or acceptable to the complainant, then the complainant may approach one of the following individuals who have been designated and trained as independent points of contact under this procedure. They can advise the complainant on the implications of the legislation and the possible internal and external avenues of complaint open to them:

LADO (local Authority Designated Officer)

Barbara Piddington
Fiona Armfield
Mark Blackwell

Telephone 01962876364 (secure line)
Email child.protection@hants.gov.uk

Form available at
www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/safeguardingchildren/allegations

Investigating Procedure

The investigating officer should follow these steps:

- Full details and clarifications of the complaint should be obtained.
 - The investigating officer should inform the member of staff against whom the complaint is made as soon as is practically possible. The member of staff will be informed of their right to be accompanied by a trade union or work colleague at any future interview or hearing. At the discretion of the investigating officer and dependant on the circumstances of the complaint an alternative representative may be allowed e.g. the individual's legal representative.
 - The allegations should be fully investigated by the investigating officer with the assistance where appropriate, of other individuals / bodies.
 - A judgement concerning the complaint and validity of the complaint will be made by the investigating officer. This judgement will be detailed in a written report containing the findings of the investigations and reasons for the judgement. The report will be passed to the Chairperson.
 - The Chairperson will decide what action to take. If the complaint is shown to be justified, then they will invoke the disciplinary or other appropriate procedures.
 - The complainant should be kept informed of the progress of the investigations and, if appropriate, of the final outcome.
 - If appropriate, a copy of the outcomes will be used to enable a review of Westbrook Little People procedures.
-
- Victimisation of an individual for raising concerns is a disciplinary offence. This is also the case for false allegations and disciplinary action will be taken against individuals.

Further guidance

- 06 Safeguarding children and child protection policy
- Employee handbook
- 0.8 Employment policy
- www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/safeguardingchildren/allegations

- www.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/childcare/providers/safeguarding-earlyyears.htm

This policy was adopted by	Westbrook Little People
On	September 2021
Date to be reviewed	
Signed on behalf of the provider	
Name of signatory	Michelle Traviss
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Manager

