



Little Acorns Childcare
Beacon Church
Oakes Road
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP32 6PX
Telephone 01284 756588



Email: littleacornschildcare@beaconchurchuk.org

Whistle Blowing Policy

Statement of Intent

Little Acorns Childcare is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. We encourage employees and others with genuine concerns about any person linked with the setting and/or others (e.g. Parents/Carers) to come forward and voice those concerns.

Aim

At Little Acorns Childcare our staff members' views, feelings and opinions are respected and taken seriously in every situation.

This policy makes it clear that employees, Parents, Carers and others can do so without fear of reprisals. The whistleblowing policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise such concerns rather than overlooking the problem.

The procedure allows employees to raise concerns about the management/staff of the setting.

Methods

- 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 that you have observed.
- 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; Ofsted has limited powers to deal with complaints.
- 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. Ofsted cannot take action over grievances.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) 1998, also known as the whistleblowing act is intended to promote internal and regulatory disclosures and encourage workplace accountability and self-regulation.

Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within their setting. However, they may not express their growing concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances, it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may be just a suspicion of malpractice and wrongdoing at work.

The concern may be about something that:

- Is against the policies and procedures of Little Acorns Childcare
- Falls below established standards of practice
- Amounts to improper conduct
- Is a health and safety risk





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- Contradicts Little Acorns Childcare's code of conduct
- Contributes to a safeguarding risk involving children in the care of Little Acorns Childcare

The procedure will be communicated to all employees as well as Parents/Carers, students and others.

Harassment or Victimisation

Little Acorns Childcare recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal. Little Acorns Childcare will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith. However, should you feel that you have suffered harassment, either directly or indirectly as a result of raising a concern, you should refer to the complaints policy.

Confidentiality

Little Acorns Childcare will do its best to protect your identity when you raise a concern. However, it must be appreciated that, in the interests of natural justice, and investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by you may be required as part of the evidence.

Anonymous Allegations

You are strongly encouraged to put your name on any allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful. Anonymous allegations will be considered and any action taken at the discretion of Little Acorns Childcare in conjunction with the relevant agencies where appropriate.

Malicious or Vexatious Allegations – Staff

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you.

How to Raise a Concern (For Employees)

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with your room Supervisor, Deputy Manager or Manager. This depends, however on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who you think may be involved in the malpractice.

If you believe that your room Supervisor is involved, you should approach Senior Management.

If you feel the Senior Management may be involved, you should approach the Chairperson.

With specific regard to Safeguarding issues, that may involve a member of staff, you should initially consult with the Deputy Manager or Manager. If you suspect they may be related to the issue you should contact David Stevenson on 01284 702860.

Concerns are better raised in writing. You are advised to set out background and history of your concerns, giving names, dates and places, where possible, and the reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation.





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The earlier you express your concern, the easier it is for Little Acorns Childcare to take action.

Although you are not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, you will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are sufficient grounds for the initial enquiries to be made.

How Little Acorns Childcare Will Respond

The action taken will depend on the nature of the concern. The matters raised may:

- Be investigated internally
- Be referred to the Police

In order to protect individuals, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate. Concerns and allegations that fall within the scope of specific procedures (e.g. Safeguarding or discrimination issues) will normally be referred for consideration under those procedures.

Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for an investigation.

How The Matter Can Be Taken Further

If the complaint has not been dealt with in a manner which is satisfactory to the employee, Parent/Carer or others involved, then they can contact OFSTED directly at the following address:

Early Years OFSTED
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Tel: 0300 123 1231
Web: www.ofsted.gov.uk

By registering a formal complaint with OFSTED an officer in most cases will be sent to the nursery to carry out a further investigation. If applicable, a report would then be sent with action points.

Reviewed September 2020
By: Katrina Rose
Next review: September 2021

