**Whistleblowing** 

**1.1a: Whistleblowing within the Workplace**

What is whistleblowing?

“Whistleblowing is the term used when someone who works in or for an organisation wishes to raise concerns about malpractice, wrongdoing, illegality or risk in the organisation (for example, crimes, civil offences, miscarriages of justice, dangers to health and safety), and/or the cover up of any of these. The malpractice has a public interest aspect to it, usually because it threatens others. It applies to raising a concern within the organisation as well as externally”.

(Cited from, ‘Whistleblowing to Ofsted about safeguarding in local authority children’s services’, 2014)

Policy Statement

At Mayfield Preschool we want staff to feel confident in their roles as practitioners. Part of their role includes feeling confident in reporting concerns for malpractice within the workplace, so that children may continue to enjoy a safe and nurturing environment in which they can play, learn and enjoy. This policy is to support staff and committee in making a complaint it they witness any incidents that should raise concern over the safety of a child within our setting.

**Procedures and Aims**

* Ensure all staff and committee members understand their responsibilities and know that they can report an incident deemed to raise concerns over child safety, or of abuse of any kind.
* Meant to foster a workplace that encourages openness and discussion between all staff and committee members.
* Allows for staff and committee to raise concerns and receive feedback on any action taken.
* Ensures that staff and committee will receive a response to concerns raised and are aware of avenues to take should they not be satisfied.
* Reassures all staff and committee that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if they have made any disclosures in good faith and in the interests of the children in our care.
* Uses information outlined in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

**Types of Concern**

* Any conduct which is an offence or a breach of law.
* Practice which is in breach of the statutory requirements laid out in the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2017, from which Early Years Professionals are governed
* Any health and safety risk
* Discrimination
* Anti-social behaviour such as bullying and humiliation
* Abuse and neglect
* Sexual or physical abuse
* Damage to the environment
* The unauthorised use of preschool funds
* Possible fraud and corruption
* Other unethical conduct

**Promoting Children’s Welfare and Reporting Concerns**

We are bound to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in our care, and any staff or committee member, acting in good faith and with information that they believe to be true, should raise concerns to the Manager, who will advise of the actions to be taken in response to the concerns raised. This could include consulting with other professional bodies such as the **Area Safeguarding Board**, **The Single Point of Advice Team** **SPOA** who will contact our **LADO**, **Ofsted**, **NSPCC/SLES.** The individual who has raised the concern will be notified in writing of the result of the concern within 28 days. We will also notify other professional bodies of the concern, (such as Ofsted) when required to do so by law, within the stated legal timeframes i.e. 14 days if the concern is an allegation of serious harm or abuse by any person working or looking after children on the premises.

On occasion, individuals may feel that they are unable to discuss a matter with the manager, or may be raising issues concerning the manager, and so should report to the Chair of Committee. The Chair will decide in consultation, if necessary with other professional bodies such as;

**Area** **Safeguarding Board**, **The Single Point of Advice Team** **SPOA** our **LADO, NSPCC/SLES** or **Ofsted**) what action is to be taken. This may include whether the concern can be dealt with through the groups own Grievance policy. A disclosure, made sincerely, to the Manager or the Chair will be protected. Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible. The individual raising the concern will not suffer any detrimental treatment and will be supported as much as possible as we recognise how stressful it can be to report a colleague.

NB: There are no restrictions in Employment law relating to length of service or age of individual. Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act, employees may safely seek legal advice on any concerns they have about malpractice. This Act does not at present cover volunteers.

For further guidance staff and parents can refer to our safeguarding board in the office, taking reference of the ‘Managing allegations/concerns about individuals who work or volunteer with children’ document and flow chart.

**Contacts**

**Single Point of Advice (SPOA)**

Telephone: **01323 464222**

Email: **spoa@eastsussex.gov.uk**

**LADO** Complete an online referral which will go directly to the LADO inbox. Someone will then email or return contact by phone.

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/professional-resources/lado/>

**NSPCC**

Whistleblowing hotline: 0800 028 0285

**Pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding**

<http://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/>

**Safeguarding Unit** (if LADO is unavailable but consultation required)

Telephone: **01323 466606**

Email: **lado@eastsussex.gov.uk**

**Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) East**

Telephone: **01424 724144**

**Emergency Duty Service (EDS)**

Telephone: **01273 335905/335906**

This Policy has been written and agreed by

Chair of committee Ben Pearce Signature

Manager Paige Merrick Signature

Deputy Manager Kerry Abbott Signature

Date

To be reviewed on: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or sooner if current legislation and practice changes.