

Whistleblowing Policy

Rationale

Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something wrong within the setting. Staff may not express their concerns as this would seem disloyal to their colleagues, also for fear of harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances, it may be easier to ignore the concerns rather than report what may be just suspicion of malpractice and wrong doing at work.

Peasmarsh Flying Start Pre-School is committed to the highest possible standards of openness. In line with this commitment, we encourage employees and others with genuine concerns about any person linked with the setting, including parents and carers, to come forward and voice concerns.

This policy document makes it clear that employees, parents and carers can do so without fear of reprisal. The Whistleblowing Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise such concerns within Peasmarsh Flying Start Pre-School rather than overlooking the problem.

The procedure allows employees, parents and carers, and outside agencies to raise concerns about the management and staff of the Peasmarsh Flying Start Pre-School.

This policy aims to:

- Provide avenues for you to raise concerns and receive feedback on any action taken.
- Allow you to take the matter further if you are dissatisfied with the outcome or response.
- Reassure that steps will be taken to protect everyone from reprisals or victimisation for whistleblowing in good faith.

How to raise a concern (employees)

Firstly you should raise concerns with your immediate manager. This depends, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who may be involved in malpractice. For example, if you believe that the manager is involved you should approach the Management Committee.

With specific regard to Safeguarding issues that may involve a member of staff, you should initially consult with the senior management of the relevant Social Services Department for advice and assistance.

Concerns should be raised in writing as soon as possible. You are advised to set a paper trail of your concerns giving names, dates and places, where possible, and the reasons for your concerns. 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 initial enquiries to be made.

How Peasmarsh Flying Start Pre-School will respond

The action taken by the Pre-School will depend on the nature of the concern. The matters raised may:

- Be investigated internally
- Be referred to the Police

Allegations referred directly to the Childcare Officer or Social Services will be dealt with in accordance with their policies and all procedures. Any person who is the subject of an allegation should at the appropriate times be given details of the allegation in order to respond.

In order to protect individuals, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. Concerns or allegations that fall within the scope of specific procedures will normally be referred for consideration under those procedures.

Some concerns may be resolved without the need for investigation. The following process will be followed in the event of complaints:

- Peasmarsh Flying Start Pre-School will ensure that a letter is sent to confirm the receipt of the complaint.
- The complaint will be fully investigated and within 5 days of when the complaint was first received. The Pre-School will endeavour to investigate all complaints in a non-discriminatory manner.

The procedure will be communicated to all employees as well as parents and carers, students and others.

Harassment or victimisation

Peasmarsh Flying Start Pre-School recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal. Peasmarsh Flying Start Pre-School 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.

This does not mean that if you are already the subject of disciplinary procedure that those procedures will be halted as a result of your whistleblowing.

This applies to parents and carers of the setting who then decide to seek alternative childcare.

Confidentiality

Peasmarsh Flying Start Pre-School 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, any investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by you may be required.

Anonymous allegations

You are strongly encouraged to put your name to allegations. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful. Anonymous allegations will be considered and any action taken at the discretion of Peasmarsh Flying Start Pre-School and in conjunction with the relevant agencies where appropriate.

Malicious allegations – Staff

If you make an allegation in good faith, no action will be taken against you. If however, you make a malicious or vexatious allegation, disciplinary action may be taken against you in accordance with Pre-School procedure.

Further contacts

If you do not feel that the matter has been dealt with in a manner which is satisfactory to the employee, parents, carers or others involved, then they can contact:

Early Years Ofsted
0300 123 1231
www.ofsted.gov.uk

If you have worries about a child you can contact:

Local School Extended Services 01323 463 026
Local Safeguarding Children Board members 01273 481 544

Adoption of Policy

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the committee of Peasmarsh Flying Start Pre-School on Pre-School premises on:

Date:

Signed on behalf of the Pre-School:

Print name of signatory:

Witnessed by:

Print name of witness:

Agreement to adhere to policy by Pre-School staff

I confirm that I have read and understood this policy:

Name of staff member: Dawn Bull

Signature:

Date:

Name of staff member: Julie Stevens

Signature:

Date:

Name of staff member: Sarah Sturmer

Signature:

Date:

Name of staff member: Vonni Haydon

Signature:

Date:

Name of staff member: Rowena Tucker

Signature:

Date:

Name of Student/ Volunteer:

Signature:

Date: