



## Topkidz Whistleblowing Policy

### **Safeguarding children - Whistle blowing**

#### **Policy Statement**

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 (e.g. crimes, civil offences, miscarriages of justice, danger to health and safety) and/or the cover up of any of these.

Topkidz believes it is vital to enable individuals to formally highlight issues of concern or malpractices in the workplace without fear of victimisation or retribution and that appropriate action is taken.

#### **Procedures**

We recognise that raising issues of genuine concern about practice deemed unsuitable may be a difficult choice for people to make. However, as a childcare provider we expect employees, volunteers and committee members to be responsible for highlighting their concerns so that problems can be resolved and removed quickly and effectively. In accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 this policy provides people with an appropriate forum for raising such issues.

Because we take such matters very seriously, this policy provides an opportunity for our staff to formally highlight issues of concern or malpractices in the workplace without fear or victimisation or retribution and appropriate action taken. Genuine concerns raised under this Policy will provide people with protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act. Issues may be formally raised through the manager or owner (Dupe.)

Once the matter has been raised details will be taken about the concern, people involved, any actions already undertaken and views on the potential solution to the problem. A full investigation will be undertaken by the owner. Any individual raising an issue will be encouraged to participate fully in any investigation. Every effort will be made to provide specific and timely feedback, in writing, about the progress of the investigation, however, this may not always be possible as to do so may break our responsibility of confidence to another party involved in the investigation.

If the person raising the concern does not feel it has been properly addressed internally or does not want to raise it internally then it can be raised outside of pre-school. Advice can be sought from the independent Whistleblowing charity Public Concern at Work on 020 7404 6609 or by email [helpline@pcaw.co.uk](mailto:helpline@pcaw.co.uk). If the concern is to be raised externally it should also be raised with the Herts Safeguarding Children's Board – contact details for who are on the staff notice board and contact details on the Recognise, Respond and Refer Poster.

If the concern is about an immediate or current risk to an individual child or children the Herts Safeguarding Children's Board child protection procedures must be followed and the Local Authority Designated Officer must be contacted – see staff notice board and information screen in the foyer for contact details on the Recognise, Respond and Refer Poster.

### **Examples of issues to be raised**

Any person that has a reasonable suspicion and/or evidence that inappropriate activities or malpractice exists in the setting, either relating to people or childcare processes, should raise this issue internally as a matter of urgency, so that it can be dealt with quickly and effectively. Issues may relate to:

- Contravention of Company Policies of Codes of Practice
- Criminal offences
- Failure to comply with legal obligations
- Miscarriages of justice
- Health and Safety
- Damage to the environment
- Immediate or current risk to a child or children
- Actions to deliberately conceal evidence of any of the above categories

A formal issue may be raised either when the matter has occurred, is occurring or is felt likely to occur.

### **Confidentiality**

Whilst it will be very difficult to deal with any complaints raised on an anonymous basis, we recognise that people may want to raise a concern in confidence under this policy. Any person may ask the setting to protect their identity by keeping their confidence and we will commit to do so, although may ask for a good

reason for concealing any individual's identity. We will endeavor to maintain this confidentiality even where formal requests for full information are received, in the course of legal proceedings.

### **Protection of staff members**

If a member of staff raises a genuine concern under this policy, we will ensure that they will not be at risk of losing their job or suffering any form of disadvantage in the working environment as a result. This assurance is not extended to someone who maliciously raises a matter that they know to be untrue. In the event of this happening the individual could be liable to disciplinary action.

### **Staff Responsibility**

Individuals employed by Topkidz who wish to highlight concerns about the setting may have regard to the procedures within this policy in order to do so.

The day to day responsibility for whistle blowing within the setting is the managers who will ensure that:

- Adequate resources are made available to implement this policy
- Adequate arrangements are made to bring this policy to the notice of all staff, students, volunteers and committee members
- The effectiveness of the policy and its arrangements are reviewed annually during the relevant meetings or more frequently if deemed necessary

Ofsted's "Whistleblowing to Ofsted about safeguarding in local authority children's services" – April 2014

The Public Interest and Disclosure Act 1998 (Whistleblowing Act)

Ofsted's Whistleblowing Helpline 0300 1233155

Ofsted's Whistleblowing email [Whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:Whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk)

For independent advice call the independent whistleblowing charity public concern at work on 02074046609, email [whistle@pcaw.org.uk](mailto:whistle@pcaw.org.uk). For more information refer to their website [www.pcaw.co.uk](http://www.pcaw.co.uk)