



Whistle blowing

If workers bring information about wrongdoing to the attention of their employers, or a relevant organisation, they are protected in certain ways under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. This is commonly referred to as 'whistle blowing'. Whistle blowing is more formally known as 'making a disclosure in the public interest'. The law that protects whistle-blowers is for the public interest so people are encouraged to speak out about malpractice in an organisation.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act protects workers who 'blow the whistle' about wrongdoing/malpractice. It applies where a worker has a reasonable belief that their disclosure tends to show one or more of the following offences or breaches:

- A criminal offence
- A breach of legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- A danger to the health and safety of any individual
- Damage to the environment
- Deliberate covering up of information tending to show any of the above.

Policy Statement

Hopscotch Playgroup attaches great importance to the identification and rectification of malpractice. Staff and volunteers have a duty to speak out if they notice any wrong doing or malpractice. This policy is underpinned by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and is intended to:

- enable and encourage individuals to raise genuine and legitimate concerns.
- to support staff to take an active role in the elimination of poor or insufficient practices.
- investigate any concerns raised appropriately and confidentially.
- ensure protection to those making the complaint against any form of retaliation or victimisation.

It is not intended that this policy be a substitute for, or an alternative to, the formal Grievance Procedure, but is designed to nurture a culture of openness and transparency within the organisation, which makes it safe and acceptable for employees and volunteers to raise, in good faith, a concern they may have about misconduct or malpractice.

Procedures

We encourage reflective practice and good communication between staff. Opportunities to raise concerns are provided by regular supervision sessions with the manager.

An employee, parent or volunteer who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise a concern about malpractice should normally report the matter to the playgroup manager who will then advise on the action that will be taken.

If it is not appropriate to go to the playgroup manager the chair of the Board of Directors, currently Mrs. Elizabeth Bamford, should be contacted. Her contact details are available at Hopscotch on the noticeboard.

If an employee, parent or volunteer felt that the above individuals were involved in the malpractice they should contact Ofsted's whistle blowing helpline on 0300 123 3155 or email whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk or write to WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1-2WD.

Safeguarding and child protection issues should be reported immediately and directly to the local social services team on **0116 454 1004**.

The whistle blower is allowed, where possible, to disclose information in confidence and remain anonymous.

No disciplinary action will be taken against whistle-blowers in respect of disclosures made in good faith.

This policy was adopted at a board meeting of Hopscotch Playgroup, held on 26th November 2013.

Reviewed on 16th September 2014

Reviewed 16th September 2015

Reviewed 19th September 2017

Reviewed and amended 8th October 2018