



## Whistle Blowing Policy (links to Safe Guarding Children Policy and Staffing & Employment Policy)

Kingston St Mary Preschool, in line with the guidance and procedures of the Somerset Local Safeguarding Children Board, has set up procedures if a concern is raised about malpractice within its organisation. This policy applies to Employees, Students and Volunteers including Committee members.

This policy and the procedures form part of the staff handbook, where staff are encouraged to feel confident in raising any concerns regarding practice.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, is the foundation of this policy which covers:

- **Conduct** – which an individual may consider to be a criminal offence that has been committed or likely to be committed.
- **Breaches of procedures** – linked to the policies and procedures of the setting.
- **Abuse** – Any behaviour which an individual genuinely finds unacceptable or inappropriate – linking to Safeguarding procedures.
- **Failure to comply with legal obligations** – i.e. completing accident/incident records etc
- **Fraud** – the finances, equipment and business of the setting.
- **Health and Safety** – Risks to an individual and / or environment.
- **Disclosure** – relating to a miscarriage of justice.
- **Deliberate concealment** -of information about any of the above.

The Preschool recognises that reporting a concern can be difficult and will support individuals through the process and take appropriate action to protect the individual.

### Procedure

An individual who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise a concern should normally report the matter to the preschool Leader or Chairman/Committee member who will advise the individual of the action that will be taken in response to the concerns raised. Background and history of the concern, names, relevant dates, places and the reasons for making the disclosure will be noted. Concerns will be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible.

If the individual feels the matter cannot be discussed with the Leader or Chairman/committee member they should contact Ofsted for advice on what steps to follow.

**Confidentiality** will be maintained wherever possible. Written notes taken on the concern will be kept, securely, by the individual and to whom they have made the disclosure.

### **Dealing with the concern –**

***If Urgent action is required i.e. possible abuse, Health & Safety risk, action may have to be taken before an investigation is conducted (links to safeguarding of both adults and children).***

The concern will be acknowledged within 5 working days, indicating how the matter will be dealt with, (initial enquiries to be made, advice to be sought, possible further investigations) who will be involved and where possible an estimation of time to provide a response. Check if individual needs support.

Initial enquiries will be made and advice taken from Leader/Chairman/Ofsted on further steps to take. If the concern falls within the scope of the Preschool's procedures, this may be dealt with through the policy and procedures of the setting i.e. Staffing & Employment Policy. Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation.

The individual will not suffer any personal detriment as a result of raising any genuine concern

If the individual is dissatisfied with the response from the setting, the matter can be raised as appropriate with one of the following:

- Local Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Preschool Learning Alliance.
- Ofsted.
- Their Solicitor.
- The Police.
- Any other professional body or regulatory / voluntary organisation.

*Acting in good faith – must believe the concern to be substantially true; not to act maliciously or make false allegations; not to seek any personal gain.*