

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

This policy links to:

The Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE 2017) Statutory Framework – Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five

Other Centre policies: Child Protection, Confidentiality, Student and Volunteer, Visitors, Staff Policy

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Leaping Toads is committed to maintaining the highest possible standards of openness, reflective practice and accountability.
- 1.2 In line with this commitment we expect employees, and others that we deal with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the Centre's work to come forward and voice those concerns. We expect our staff to act in a professional manner at all times.

2. WHISTLEBLOWING

- 2.1 Whistleblowing encourages and enables Staff to raise serious concerns within Leaping Toads rather than overlooking a problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside.
- 2.2 Fears of Whistleblowing: staff are often the first to realise that there is something seriously wrong with another colleague or aspect of the setting. However, they may not express their concerns as they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the Centre. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice.
- 2.3 Leaping Toads asks that Staff put aside their fears, and follow the Whistleblowing procedure (point 4).

3. THIS POLICY

- 3.1 This policy is intended to encourage Staff (paid and volunteer), students and others to report suspected or actual occurrence(s) of illegal, unethical or inappropriate events, behaviours or practices **without retribution**. It is recognised that most cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis.

4. WHISTLEBLOWING PROCEDURE

- 4.1 At the earliest opportunity the Whistleblower should promptly report the suspected or actual event to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or in her absence the Deputy DSL.
- 4.2 In the event of a concern being raised against the DSL, concerns are to be raised with a member of the Safeguarding team or the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) team who may refer to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer). Such concerns should always be logged with Ofsted.

5. EXAMPLES OF SITUATIONS

- 5.1 The whistleblowing policy is intended to cover major concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures including:
 - 5.1.1 Conduct which is an offence or a breach of law, or likely to be committed, including damage to the environment.
 - 5.1.2 A person who has failed, or likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which they are subject (e.g. EYFS Statutory Framework).
 - 5.1.3 Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees.
 - 5.1.4 Emotional, sexual or physical abuse of children
 - 5.1.5 Any other unethical conduct

6. ANY INFORMATION

- 6.1. Tendencies to show any of the above examples are likely to be deliberately concealed.
- 6.2 If the information relates to child protection or safeguarding, then Leaping Toad's Child Protection Policy procedure should be followed.
- 6.3. The Whistleblower can report the event with his/her identity, or anonymously.
- 6.4. The Whistleblower shall receive no retaliation or retribution for the report that was provided in good faith – that was not done primarily with malice to damage another or the Centre's reputation.
- 6.5 A Whistleblower who makes a report that is not done in good faith is subject to discipline.
- 6.6 Anyone who retaliates against the Whistleblower (who reported an event in good faith) will be subject to discipline (See disciplinary action in Staff Policy).

7. THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD [DSL]

- 7.1 The DSL or Deputy DSL who receives the report must promptly act to investigate and/or resolve the issue.
- 7.2. If the investigation of a report, that was done in good faith and investigated by the DSL/DDSL, is not to the Whistleblower's satisfaction, then he/she has the right to report the event to Ofsted on 0300 123 1231.
- 7.3 The identity of the Whistleblower, if known, shall remain confidential to those persons directly involved in applying this policy, unless the issue requires investigation by Ofsted or the Police.

8. IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

MASH – Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub - 0208 227 3811
LADO – Local Authority Designated Officer - 020 8227 3934

Written: 6th March 2018
Reviewed:
Latest Review:
Review Date: MARCH 2019