



## WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

**Definition: Whistleblowing is raising a concern about malpractice within an organisation.**

Protection: We are committed to delivering a high-quality pre-school service, promoting organisational accountability and maintaining public confidence.

This policy provides individuals in the workplace with protection from victimisation or punishment where they raise a genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice in the organisation.

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

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, by a member of the public or another member of staff, the leader must be informed immediately.

The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the leader/designated person).

If an employee or volunteer feels the matter cannot be discussed with the Leader then contact with our Chairperson should be made on

Or with our Key Social Worker, Clare O'Dempsey should be made on 028 9504 2811

[Clare.odempsey@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:Clare.odempsey@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

Or the Duty Social Worker at 028 9050 7000

Where the matter is referred to Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. The member of staff will be removed from duties involving direct contact with children and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by the BH&SCT.

It should be noted that information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held 'in confidence'. In the interests of the child, staff may need to share this information with other professionals. However, only those who need to know will be told. Parents of the child will also be informed. An employee or volunteer who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise such a concern should normally report the matter to the leader who will advise the employee or volunteer of the action that will be taken in response to the concerns expressed. Concerns should be investigated and

resolved as quickly as possible. A disclosure in good faith to the leader will be protected. Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible and the employee or volunteer will not suffer any personal detriment as a result of raising any genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice within the organisation.

**Annual Responsibilities of Management Committee.**

There will be an annual review of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures by the Management Committee. This will take place during the first term Management Committee meeting

- A report from the leader on any Child Protection activity will be presented annually as an Agenda item to the Management Committee at the first meeting.
- A record of Child Abuse Complaints made against staff is considered annually as an Agenda item by the Committee. All staff members renew their Child Protection training every 3 years. However, if any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/she has concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise the signs or symptoms of possible abuse, he/she should speak to the designated person. If the designated person is the person suspected of abusing, immediately report to the leader (Deputy CPO). Should the staff member be dissatisfied by the handling of the concern then report to our Link Social Worker (contact above). All staff have a duty of care to children and also to the staff within the setting.

This Policy last reviewed	Date: 29 10 2021	Date: 08.12.22
Signed: 	Position in Naíscoil na Seolta: Chair	Position in Naíscoil na Seolta: Committee Member