



## **BENTILEE NURSERY SCHOOL** **RAISING CONCERNS (WHISTLEBLOWING)**

DATE OF POLICY: Spring 2nd half term 2020 LAST REVIEWED: Spring 2nd half term 2025      **Next review date Spring 2<sup>nd</sup> half term 2026**

- To support everyone who wishes to express their concerns about questionable or poor practice where the interests of others/children or the nursery are at risk.

### **Barriers to whistleblowing**

- Fear of being wrong.
- Fear of reprisal.
- Fear of escalation.
- Fear of damage to career.
- Fear of not being believed.

- This policy aims to address these fears.

### **The Governors will:-**

- Ensure that a prompt and fair investigation is conducted.

### **The Headteacher will:-**

- Ensure staff are aware of their duty to express their concerns about questionable or poor practice.
- Undertake an investigation related to concerns raised.
- Liaise with all parties.
- Ensure that staff raising issues are not subject to reprisals.
- Hold the register of any reports.
- Respect confidentiality, however it may not always be possible not to disclose the identity of a member of staff raising the concern. Their identity will not be disclosed, however, without their prior knowledge.
- Ensure staff are aware that the earlier a concern is reported the easier it is to take action.
- All concerns will be treated in confidence and we will make every effort not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness.
  - Nursery personnel have a duty to the Nursery not to disclose confidential information, however, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 this does not prevent an employee from seeking independent advice.
- If a suspicion is voiced in good faith but is not confirmed by the investigation,

no action will be taken against the person.

- Ensure staff have the protocol to refer to when whistleblowing:-
- Where the issue concerns your Headteacher or, having made your report, you believe he/she has failed to take appropriate action, then you should bring it to the attention of the Chair of Governors. Employees who feel unable to follow this route, for whatever reason, have the option of contacting one of the names listed in at the end of this document.

### **WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IF AN ISSUE IS RAISED WITH A MEMBER OF STAFF?**

If a member of staff (other than the Headteacher) is approached by a colleague on a matter of concern as defined in this document, he/she should be advised to take the matter to the Headteacher unless the concern is regarding the Headteacher.

### **EXAMPLES OF ILLEGAL AND/OR IMPROPER CONDUCT**

- fraudulent or improper use of the school's money or assets
- dangerous practices at work
- corruptly receiving any gift or advantage, thus failing to comply with the Bribery Act 2010
- allowing private interests to override the interests of the school.

### **Staff will:-**

- Consult their professional body when appropriate.
- Co-operate with the Headteacher and any appropriate outside agency after consultation with their professional organisation.
- Exercise utmost confidentiality.
- Understand it is their duty to express concerns about poor practice.
- If the investigation concludes that there has been fabrication of the allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against the person.

**N.B. There will be no investigations of anonymous concerns.**

## **Protocol**

### **Stage 1:-**

- As a first step concerns should normally be raised with the Head teacher (Designated Lead for safeguarding).
- You may wish to consider discussing your concern with a colleague first and you may find it easier to raise the matter if there are two, or more, of you who have had the same concerns.

- If you feel that you cannot approach any of these, (for maintained schools), if you feel unable to raise your concerns by any other route you can report it to the City Council Monitoring Officer who is James Doble, Assistant Director of Governance Services.
- Concerns are best raised in writing. If you feel this is not possible you can telephone or meet the appropriate person.
- Your report, written or verbal, should set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible, and the reason why you are concerned about the situation.

If required please see the Local Authority Whistle blowing Policy and The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 for further information.  
you are concerned about the situation.

## **Stage 2**

- Within 10 working days the person with whom the concern has been registered acknowledges receipt in writing.
- The letter will state the following:

How the concern will be dealt with;  
How long it will take to provide a final response; Information on employee support services.

## **Stage 3**

- After initial enquiries have been conducted, a decision will be made if an investigation should take place.
- The investigation will be either:

An internal investigation;  
A referral to the police;  
A referral to the EFA/DFE;  
An external independent enquiry.

## **Stage 4**

The employee will be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation by the Governing Body. The Nursery Governing Body will keep the Headteacher, fully informed of any decisions made.

- The employee has the right to take their concern to an independent body, Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Department for Education, Castle View

House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ if they feel it has not been addressed adequately.

### **Allegations against the Headteacher**

If the allegation is against the Head teacher you would, in the first instance contact the Chair of Governors- Ann Harvey and she would liaise with the Assistant director of Governance services James Doble ( phone numbers below)

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed as and when required.

### **NAMES TO CONTACT**

- **CHAIR OF GOVERNORS Ann Harvey Tel :- 07913600733**

#### **Governance Services**

- James Doble (Assistant Director of Governance Services)

Civic Centre Glebe Street, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 1RG

**Tel :- 234058** (Julie Wright Mr. Doble's assistant)

Or any of the following trade union and professional association representatives:

**UNISON** Stoke on Trent Office 01782 236750

**NASUWT** 0121 232 9400

**NUT** 01782 722407



**Issues to consider at Initial Assessment/Fact Finding meeting**

<b>Before meeting:</b>	<b>Notes:</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	
<b>Persons present:</b>	
<b>Who else has been made aware of the employee's disclosure?</b>  Consider friends, family, colleagues, external agencies etc.	
<b>Confidentiality</b>  Discuss the requirement for the employee themselves to maintain confidentiality, including the fact they have raised a concern, the nature of the concern and the identity of those involved	
<b>After meeting:</b> Write to the employee providing the following:	<b>Notes:</b>
A copy of the Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Procedure	
A written record of the meeting in the section "discussion notes"	
Confirm whether the concerns will be investigated and if not, why not	
Confirm how concerns will be dealt with in the short term and if any initial enquiries have been made	
Confirm support available during the process	
Confirm point of contact	

## Discussion Notes

BENTILEE NURSERY SCHOOL

RAISING CONCERNS (WHISTLEBLOWING)

NATURE OF CONCERN	ACTION OF INVESTIGATION	RESULT	ACTION TAKEN	RESOLUTION

