

# Whistleblowing Policy



## Policy Statement

Early Years Day Nursery Uxbridge is committed to operating with honesty, integrity, and accountability in all aspects of its practice. We promote a culture where all staff, volunteers and professionals feel confident to raise concerns about wrongdoing, unsafe practice, or failures in safeguarding without fear of victimisation or disadvantage. The nursery actively encourages a speak-up culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

This policy is written in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which protects individuals who disclose concerns in the public interest. The nursery recognises that effective whistleblowing procedures are essential to safeguarding children, maintaining high standards of care, and ensuring legal and regulatory compliance.

Raising a concern at an early stage allows issues to be addressed quickly and helps protect children, staff, and the wider organisation.

## Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all employees, students, volunteers, agency staff and any professionals working on behalf of the nursery.

It is intended to address serious concerns that are in the public interest. These may include concerns relating to safeguarding, unlawful conduct, or unsafe practice within the setting.

This policy does not replace the nursery's grievance procedure. Concerns relating to personal employment matters should be addressed through the appropriate internal procedures.

## Types of Concerns Covered

Whistleblowing concerns may include, but are not limited to, situations where there is reason to believe that:

- A criminal offence has been committed, is being committed, or is likely to be committed.
- There are concerns about staff conduct or professional practice.
- Safeguarding procedures have failed or are not being followed appropriately.
- There has been a breach of legal or regulatory requirements.
- There is misuse or unauthorised use of nursery funds or resources.
- There is fraud, bribery, or corruption.
- Children or families are being placed at risk or are being mistreated.
- There is substance misuse affecting staff performance or safety.
- There has been deliberate concealment of any of the above matters.

Individuals are not required to prove the concern but must have a reasonable belief that the information disclosed is true. Malicious or knowingly false allegations may result in disciplinary action.

## Raising a Concern

Where a concern relates to an allegation against a member of staff, the Local Authority Designated Officer must be contacted within one working day, and no internal investigation should take place prior to this consultation.

Concerns should be raised as soon as possible. Delays may impact the ability to investigate effectively.

In most cases, concerns should first be reported to the Nursery Manager. Concerns can be raised verbally in the first instance; however, they should be formally recorded in writing, including relevant details such as names, dates and circumstances.

Where the concern relates to the Nursery Manager, or where the individual does not feel comfortable raising the concern internally, it should be escalated to the nursery owner or director. Staff may also seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead where appropriate.

If an individual feels unable to raise concerns within the organisation, or believes the concern is not being taken seriously, they may contact external bodies. These include the Local Authority Designated Officer, the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line, or Ofsted.

Individuals may report concerns externally at any stage where they feel it is appropriate to do so.

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## Confidentiality and Anonymity

The nursery will treat all whistleblowing concerns sensitively and, where possible, maintain confidentiality. The identity of the individual raising the concern will only be disclosed where necessary for the investigation or where legally required.

Anonymous disclosures will be considered; however, they may be more difficult to investigate. Staff are encouraged to provide their identity to allow for a thorough and fair investigation.

## Protection for Whistleblowers

Early Years Day Nursery Uxbridge is committed to ensuring that no individual suffers any form of disadvantage, victimisation, or retaliation as a result of raising a genuine concern.

Any form of detrimental treatment, including bullying, harassment, or discrimination against a whistleblower, will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

If an individual believes they have been treated unfairly after raising a concern, this must be reported immediately and will be investigated in line with the nursery's disciplinary procedures.

## How Concerns Will Be Managed

The nursery will ensure that all concerns are recorded, risk assessed, and managed in line with safeguarding procedures, including referral to external agencies where required.

All concerns will be taken seriously and assessed promptly. The nursery will determine the appropriate course of action, which may include an internal investigation, referral to safeguarding authorities, or escalation to external agencies.

Where appropriate, the individual raising the concern will be informed that the matter has been addressed, however full details of the outcome may not always be shared due to confidentiality.

## External Contacts

If concerns cannot be raised internally, or if further advice is needed, individuals may contact:

### Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Tel: 01895 556 006

Alternative Tel: 01895 250 975

Email: [lado@hillingdon.gov.uk](mailto:lado@hillingdon.gov.uk)

### Ofsted Whistleblowing

Tel: 0300 123 3155

Email: [whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk)

Address: WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

### PROTECT

Tel: 020 3117 2520

Website: <https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

### NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line

Tel: 08000280285

Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

## Linked Policies

This policy should be read alongside the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy, Code of Conduct, Complaints Policy, and Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.

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