



Registered Charity # 1203754

Whistleblowing Policy

Introduction

Houghton and Wyton Pre-school is committed to the highest standards of safeguarding, honesty, integrity, and accountability. We promote a culture where concerns can be raised openly, without fear of victimisation or retaliation. This policy outlines how staff, volunteers, students, and others connected to the setting can raise concerns about wrongdoing in the public interest.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Grievance Policy, and Complaints Procedure.**

Aim

To ensure staff and stakeholders can raise legitimate concerns in good faith and in confidence, knowing they will be listened to and taken seriously.

Objectives

We will:

- Foster a culture of transparency, honesty, and openness
- Ensure concerns can be raised and addressed without fear of reprisal
- Respond promptly to whistleblowing disclosures and take appropriate action

Roles and Responsibilities

- **All Staff, Volunteers, and Students:** Responsible for reporting concerns in line with this policy
- **Manager/Deputy:** Acts on disclosures, carries out initial review, and safeguards those raising concerns
- **Board of Trustees:** Oversees investigations where the Manager is the subject of concern

What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is when an individual raises a concern about:

- A criminal offence or failure to comply with legal obligations
- A safeguarding failure or risk to the health, safety, or welfare of children or staff
- Misuse of funds, corruption, fraud, or bribery
- Deliberate concealment of any of the above

How to Raise a Concern

- Concerns should be raised as soon as possible and may be reported:
 - Verbally or in writing to the Manager or Deputy
 - Directly to the Board of Trustees if the concern relates to the Manager
 - Anonymously, though this may limit follow-up ability
- Where a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they should use the other channels open to them: LADO Cambridgeshire on 01223 727967.
The NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available, staff can call 0800 0280285 – 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is: help@nspcc.org.uk.
Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH. Ofsted provides guidance on how to make complaints about a provider: Complaints procedure – Ofsted – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Additionally see S3.7 & 3.8 EYFS 2025.

What Information Should Be Included?

- A clear description of the concern
- Dates, individuals involved, and supporting evidence (where possible)



- Whether the concern has been raised previously

Investigation and Outcome

- The Manager (or Board of Trustees) will:
 - Acknowledge receipt within 5 working days
 - Conduct an initial review and decide on appropriate action
- If the concern is safeguarding-related, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed immediately
- An outcome will be shared with the whistleblower (unless anonymous)
- Possible outcomes:
 - No further action (with rationale)
 - Further internal investigation
 - Referral to external authorities (LADO, Ofsted, Police)

Safeguarding and Allegations Against Staff

- Concerns about a colleague's suitability to work with children must be reported immediately to the DSL
- The LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) will be contacted as required
- These concerns will be handled under policy
- Individuals who raise concerns in good faith will not be penalised or treated unfairly
- Victimisation of a whistleblower will be treated as a disciplinary matter
- False allegations made maliciously may also result in disciplinary action
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External Reporting Options

If a concern cannot be resolved internally, whistleblowers may contact:

- LADO (Cambridgeshire): 01223 727 967
- Ofsted: 0300 123 3155 | www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline: 0800 028 0285 | help@nspcc.org.uk

Confidentiality

- All concerns are handled with sensitivity
- Identity is kept confidential wherever possible, unless required by law

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees or sooner if legislation or practice guidance changes.

Legislation and Guidance

- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
- Children Act 1989 & 2004

Acknowledgment

All staff, volunteers, students, and trustees must read and understand this policy. By doing so, they agree to promote a safe, transparent, and accountable culture at Houghton and Wyton Pre-school.