

STANDARD 10

– INFORMATION AND RECORDS



EYFS key themes and commitments

A unique child	Positive relationships	Enabling environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.3 The learning environment	

Standard 10.15 –WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Whistle blowing encourages and enables employees and committee volunteers to raise serious concerns within the organisation of Horsted Keynes pre-School rather than overlooking a problem or “blowing the whistle outside”. Our setting is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment we expect employees, and others that we deal with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of our work to come forward and voice their concerns.

By using this policy, we aim to:

- Provide avenues for relevant parties to raise concerns in confidence and receive feedback on any action taken.
- Ensure that they receive a response to their concerns and that if they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied.
- Reassure them that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if they have a reasonable belief that they have made a disclosure in good faith.

Our setting recognises that the decision to report a concern can be difficult one to make. If what is being said is true, there should be nothing to fear because the relevant party will be doing their duty to their employer and those that we provide a service for. All concerns will be related in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal the identity of the whistle blower if they so wish. At the appropriate time, however, they may need to come forward as a witness.

Our setting is committed to good practice and high standards and wants to be supportive of employees. We will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect our staff when they raise a concern. Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice will not influence or be influenced by any disciplinary or redundancy procedures that already affect the staff.

This policy encourages the staff however to put their name to the concern whenever possible.

Please note that:

- Staff/volunteers must disclose the information in good faith.
- Staff/volunteers must believe it to be substantially true.
- Staff/volunteers must not act maliciously or make false allegations.
- Staff/volunteers must not seek any personal gain.

Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful but will be considered at the discretion of the committee.

In exercising this discretion, the factors taken into account would include:

- The seriousness of the issues raised
- The credibility of the concern; and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.
- If an allegation is made in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against the person who made the disclosure. If, however, an allegation is made frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against the informant.

The whistle blowing policy is intended to cover major concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures. These include:

- Conduct which is an offence or breach of law
- Disclosures related to a miscarriage of justice
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees
- Damage to the environment
- The unauthorised use of funds
- Possible fraud and corruption
- Sexual or physical abuse of customers or staff or
- Other unethical conduct

Thus, any serious concerns that staff have about any aspect of service provision or the conduct of employees of our setting or others acting on behalf of our setting can be reported under the whistle-blowing policy. This may be about something that:

- Makes anyone feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards, their experience, or the standards they believe we subscribe to or is against our Policies and Procedures.
- Falls below established standards of practice or amounts to improper conduct.

How to raise a concern

An employee or volunteer who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise such a concern should normally report the matter to the manager 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.

If an employee or volunteer feels the matter cannot be discussed with the manager, he or she should contact LADO (Local Area Designated Officer) on 0330 222 3339 or 01403 229900 for advice on what steps to follow.

A disclosure in good faith to the manager 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. This may depend, however on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of malpractice. For example, if it is believed that management is involved a more senior level of management should be approached if possible or the chairman of the committee.

Staff/volunteers who wish to make a written report are invited to use the following format:

- The background and history of the concern (giving relevant dates)
- The reason why they are particularly concerned about the situation.

If a concern is raised immediately after it happens; the easier it becomes to take action. The whistle blower will not be expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of the allegation, but will need to:

- Demonstrate to the person contacted that there are reasonable grounds for concern. It could be that the person noticing the issue may wish to consider discussing the concern with a colleague first or may find it easier to raise the matter if there are two (or more) people who have the same experience or concerns. It is also possible to invite a professional representative or a friend to be present during any meetings or interviews in connection with the concerns that have been raised.

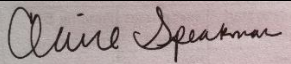
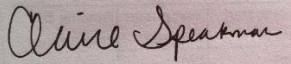
We have in place a complaints procedure for further guidance as to what procedures to follow. This policy does NOT replace the complaints procedure.

We will respond to any concerns using the guidelines within this policy and the complaints policy and procedure. We hope this will satisfy the relevant parties especially with regard to any action taken. If this does not answer the concerns, and it is felt that it is right to take the matter further, the following are possible contact points:

- Public Concern at Work (02074046609), a registered charity whose services are free and strictly confidential
- Education & Childcare Advisory Service – Early Year team contacts – Helen Young- childcare officer (Helen.Young@RBWM.gov.org)
- Ofsted – (www.ofsted.gov.uk)
- Your local Citizens Advice Bureau
- The police

If the matter is taken outside Horsted Keynes Preschool, it should be ensured that no confidential information is disclosed. Please check with our confidentiality policy for guidance.

Signed on behalf of the provider:

This policy was adopted by	Horsted Keynes Preschool
On	1 st October 2017
Reviewed 1 st Oct 2018	 
Reviewed 1 st Oct 2019	
Reviewed 1 st Oct 2020	
Reviewed 1 st Oct 2021	
Reviewed 1 st Oct 2022	
Signed on behalf of the provider	
Name of signatory & Role of signatory	Clare Humphreys Manager
Countersigned by Chair of committee	
Name of counter signatory	Claire Speakman