

Whistleblowing Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Knowle Nursery school Early Years is committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity and accountability. We recognise that children's safety and welfare are paramount. All staff, volunteers, students and other individuals working with us have a duty and responsibility to raise concerns about poor practice, unsafe behaviour, risks to the health, safety, or wellbeing of children and colleagues.

This policy ensures that individuals can raise concerns without fear, reprisal or victimisation and all concerns are taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy is underpinned by:

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

The Children Act 1989 & 2004

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

EYFS Statutory Framework (2024)

Ofsted whistleblowing guidance

These documents support the right of individuals to raise concerns in the **public interest**, protect those who speak up from reprisal and ensure that serious concerns are acted upon swiftly and effectively.

SCOPE

The scope of safeguarding defines the full reach of protection duties – who is covered, who is responsible and in what situations safeguarding applies. This policy applies to all nursery staff (permanent, temporary, part-time) work experience students, volunteers, agency workers or outside professionals.

WHISTLEBLOWING is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work. It enables staff to raise concerns about poor or unsafe childcare practice, risks to child safety and well-being.



OUR COMMITMENT TO WHISTLEBLOWERS

Knowle Nursery School is committed to listening seriously to concerns taking fair and proportionate action. Protecting whistleblower from harassment, reprisals and victimisation. Keeping disclosures confidential where possible and appropriate. Ensuring staff know how and where to raise concerns, both internally and externally.

WHEN AND HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN

We encourage staff to first raise concerns internally so that issues can be addressed quickly and appropriately. You can speak to Nursery Manager, Owner, DSL and DDSL verbally, in writing or anonymously (although this may limit investigation scope). Your concern will be taken seriously and recorded in writing, investigated promptly and confidentially.

If you feel unable to raise the concern internally you can escalate it to:

OFSTED WHISTLEBLOWING HOTLINE

Phone: 0300 123 3155

Email:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whistleblowing-about-childrens-social-care-services-to-ofsted/sharing-concerns-and-information-with-ofsted-about-childrens-social-care-services>

For concerns or allegations involving a professional working with children, the DSL, Manager or owner will immediately contact LADO for advice and guidance.

The **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

The **NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line:** 0800 028 0285

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>



PROTECTION FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS

If you raise a genuine concern you are protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1988. You will not be penalised even if your concern turns out to be unfounded. Knowle Nursery will take appropriate action against any colleague who harasses, victimises or retaliates against a whistleblower.

ROLE OF MANAGERS AND DSLS

All managers and DSLs are responsible for promoting a culture of vigilance and openness, encouraging early reporting of concerns. Ensuring that all whistleblowing disclosures are handled sensitively and in line with our policy. You need to keep accurate records of concerns, investigations and outcomes.

Reporting safeguarding-related concerns to the **LADO** or **local safeguarding partners** as required.

CULTURE AND TRAINING

Knowle Nursery School actively promote a culture where: Concerns are welcomed not judged encouraging staff to speak up early. Whistleblowing training and safeguarding are part of our induction process. Staff update their safeguarding training every two years. However, staff regularly have refresher safeguarding training in house by our DSL every term. DSL attends network meetings every term and Early Years safeguarding networking meetings.

