

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

Providers must put in place a written procedure for dealing with concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour

10.16 Whistle Blowing Policy

Policy statement

This guidance is written for all employees and volunteers working at the setting.

Staff and volunteers must acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of the manager/owner/chairperson and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concern out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children or young people who are targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

Don't think what if I am wrong? Think what if I am right?

Reasons for whistle blowing

Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour

- to prevent the problem worsening or widening
- to protect or reduce risks to others
- to prevent yourself from being implicated.

What stops people from whistle blowing?

- Starting a chain of events which spirals
- disrupting the work or project
- fear of getting it wrong
- fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- fear of not being believed.

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Procedures

How to raise a concern

You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner it is possible for action to be taken.

- Try to pinpoint what practice is concerning you and why
- approach someone you trust and who you believe will respond
- make sure you get a satisfactory response – don't let matters rest
- put your concerns in writing on a Confidential Incident Record form
- discuss your concerns with the manager/owner/chairperson
- you will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern
- the manager/chairperson/owner will undertake an investigation into your concerns and offer you support.

People to contact

In the first instance you should speak to the manager – if your concern is about the manager you should speak to the chairperson/owner who will decide whether it is a matter for the Local Authority Designated Officer.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of _____ *(name of provider)*

Held on _____ *(date)*

Date to be reviewed _____ *(date)*

Signed on behalf of the provider _____

Name of signatory _____

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) _____