**WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY**

Abacus Preschool expects the highest standards of conduct from all staff and volunteers and will treat seriously any concern that is raised about illegal or improper conduct. Employees are expected to share concerns about any serious impropriety or breach of procedure with the Manager or Governing Body without fear of recrimination.

**Definition of Whistleblowing has been defined as**:

‘The disclosure by an employee or professional of confidential information which relates to some danger, fraud or other illegal or unethical conduct connected with the workplace, be it of the employee or his/her fellow employees’. (Public Concern at Work Guidelines 1997).

**This policy aims to**:

• Give members of staff the confidence to raise concerns about conduct or practice which is potentially illegal, corrupt, improper, unsafe, or unethical or which amounts to malpractice or is inconsistent with preschool standards and policies so that s/he is encouraged to act on those concerns.

• Provide members of staff with avenues to raise concerns.

• Ensure that members of staff receive a response to the concerns they have raised and feedback on any action taken.

• Offer assurance that members of staff are protected from reprisals or victimisation for whistleblowing action undertaken in good faith. Examples of illegal and/ or improper conduct • Unlawful conduct.

• Miscarriages of justice in the conduct of statutory or other processes.

• Failure to comply with a statutory or legal obligation.

• Potential maladministration, misconduct, or malpractice.

• Health and safety issues including risks to the public as well as risks to pupils and members of staff. • Action that has caused or is likely to cause danger to the environment.

• Abuse of authority.

• Unauthorised use of public or other funds.

• Fraud or corruption.

• Breaches of financial regulations or policies.

• Mistreatment of any person.

• Action that has caused or is likely to cause physical danger to any person or risk serious damage to school property.

• Unfair discrimination or favouritism.

• Racist incidents or acts, or racial harassment

• Any attempt to prevent disclosure of any of the issues listed. 3 Child protection concerns All employees and volunteers are expected to report any safeguarding and child protection concerns to the designated safeguarding lead Elsie the manager, as stated in the child protection/ safeguarding policy.

Such concerns may relate to:

• The physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect of a child.

• An inappropriate or improper relationship between an adult and a pupil.

**Anonymous allegations**:

Allegations can be made anonymously. However, this policy encourages you to put your name to your allegation, as concerns expressed anonymously are often much more difficult to investigate. **For example**, we may need to contact you to obtain further information or verify the details you have already given us. Anonymous allegations will be considered wherever possible at the discretion of the preschool. The factors to be considered when determining whether an investigation in such a case can proceed would include:

• the seriousness of the issues raised.

• the credibility of the concern; and

• The likelihood of confirming the allegation from other, attributable sources. Harassment or victimisation Abacus Pre School recognise that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal. We will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith. However, should you feel that you have suffered harassment, either directly or indirectly as a result of raising a concern, you should refer to the preschool’s harassment and bullying policy and code of practice/conduct. Confidentiality All concerns raised will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal the identity of a whistleblower. However, in certain cases, it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality, if a whistleblower is required to come forward as a witness. Unsubstantiated allegations If a member of staff makes an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against them. If, however, an allegation is made frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action is likely to be taken.

**Procedure for whistleblowing**

**As a first step**, you should normally raise concerns with your immediate manager, deputy in writing or verbally. This depends, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of the malpractice. If you feel you cannot express your concerns within the pre-school, it is open to you to 4 raise your concern with someone outside the Preschool such as:

• Chair of Governors.

• Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the matter is about child protection or safeguarding issues.

• Police.

• Health & Safety Executive.

• Relevant professional bodies or regulatory organisations.

• Department for Education.

• Ofsted

**What happens next**

The appointed person dealing with your concern will:

• Provide a written response acknowledging receipt of the concern and notifying what will happen next (unless it was an anonymous allegation)

• Look into the allegation - seeking evidence and interviewing witnesses, as necessary.

• Maintain confidentiality wherever possible but be mindful that there is no guarantee that the whistle-blower can remain anonymous.

• If appropriate, bring the matter to the attention of the Local Authority appointed person dealing with complaints about financial management of schools.

• If appropriate, for concerns of criminal behaviour refer the matter to the Police.

• If appropriate, for concerns of child protection, refer the matter to the Local Authority officer designated to lead on child protection/local authority social services designated manager for child protection.

The whistleblowing process will be halted until the statutory authorities have completed their investigations and confirmed that it is appropriate to continue with the whistleblowing process. If the person appointed by the governing body needs to talk to you, you are permitted to be accompanied by a fellow member of staff not involved in the area of work to which the concern relates.

The target is to complete the inquiry within seven working days from the date of the initial written response and write to all relevant parties to keep them informed of what is happening (if appropriate).

**Contacts**:

**Manager & Safeguarding lead**: Elsie Jeevaratnam

**SENCO** : Tracey Green

**Deputy Safeguarding Lead**: Joanna Jeevaratnam.

**Chair of the governing body**: Chris Christofi

**Single Point of Access (SPA)**: 0208 547 5008

**LADO:** (0208 891 7370)

**Written by : Elsie Jeevaratnam**

**Reviewed: March 2021**

**Next Review: March 2022**

**The Key Person and Settling**- **in Policy**

**Policy statement**:

We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. We are committed to the key person approach which benefits the child, the parents, the staff, and the setting. It encourages secure relationships which support children to thrive, give parents confidence and make the setting a happy place to attend or work in.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated, and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with our staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with our setting. We aim to make our setting a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

The key person role is set out in the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each child must have a key person. These procedures set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children.

**Procedures**

We allocate a key person before the child starts. **The key person** is responsible for:

* Providing an induction for the family and for settling the child into our setting. o Completing relevant forms with parents, including consent forms.
* Explaining our policies and procedures to parents with particular focus on policies such as safeguarding and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
* Offering unconditional regard for the child and being non-judgemental.
* Working with the parents to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child’s well-being, care and learning.
* Acting as the key contact for the parents.
* Developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child’s parents to keep those records up to date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home.
* Having links with other carers involved with the child and co-ordinating the sharing of appropriate information about the child’s development with those carers.

**Settling-in**

* Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information.
* These include written information (including our prospectus and policies) and an induction morning.
* We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before she/he starts to attend.
* At the induction morning, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
* 2 We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for most of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
* Younger children may take longer to settle in, as may children who have not previously spent time away from home.
* Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent to be on hand to re-settle them.
* We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship either with their key person or another trusted member of staff; for example the child looks for a specific staff member when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them.
* The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities. When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
* We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not ready to be left.
* We expect that the parent will honour the commitment to stay with their child until they are fully settled.
* We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the setting.
* We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
* Within the first four to six weeks of starting, we discuss and work with the child's parents to begin to create their child's record of achievement.

**The progress check at age two**

* The key person carries out the progress check at age two in accordance with any local procedures that are in place and referring to the guidance A Know How Guide: The EYFS progress check at age two.
* The progress check aims to review the child’s development and ensures that parents have a clear picture of their child’s development.
* Within the progress check, the key person will note areas where the child is progressing well and identify areas where progress is less than expected.
* The progress check will describe the actions that will be taken by us to address any developmental concerns (including working with other professionals where appropriate) as agreed with the parent(s).
* The key person will plan activities to meet the child’s needs within the setting and will support parents to understand the child’s needs in order to enhance their development at home.

**Reviewed: March 2021 Next review: March 2022**