

WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY



Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult it is important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

You may be the first to recognise something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of feelings that this would be disloyal to colleagues. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children who are targeted.

You have a responsibility to:

- Raise concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour.
- Prevent problems worsening or widening.
- Protect or reduce risk to others.
- Prevent becoming implicated yourself.

Voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why. Approach your immediate manager or child protection liaison officer.

If your concern is about your manager contact the Local Area Designated Officer on 01243 642962 and OFSTED. Make sure you get a satisfactory response. Put your concerns in writing outlining the background and history giving names, dates and places. You must demonstrate sufficient grounds for concern.

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries.
- Your employer has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- However, malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence.

SELF-REPORTING

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Members of staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned.

Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

Finally, absolutely without fail, challenge poor practice or performance. If you ignore or collude with poor practice it makes it harder to sound the alarm when things go wrong".

(Reproduced with acknowledgement to "Sounding the Alarm" Barnados.)

