

16. Whistle Blowing

At Royston Playgroup all staff are aware of the Child Protection safeguarding procedures, including procedures for dealing with allegations against staff.

Royston Playgroup staff acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of the playgroup leader or relevant agency. Although this can be difficult this is particularly important when 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 concerns 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 person who are targeted these children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

Don't think what if I'm wrong – think what if I'm 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 becoming implicated yourself.

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.

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 action can be taken.
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why.
- Speak to a senior member of staff.
- If your concern is about your immediate manager or you feel you need to speak to someone outside the setting contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 0208 461 7669 email LADO@bromley.gov.uk
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response – don't let matters rest.
- You should then put your concern in writing, outlining background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can.
- A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

What happens next?

- You should be informed on the nature and progress of the 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.
- Allegations made frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain will be seen in a different light and disciplinary action may be taken.

Further advice and support

It is recognised that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from your line manager and/or committee chairperson.

Playleaders signature..... Dated.....

Committee members signature.....Dated.....

NSPCC whistleblowing advice line 0808 800 5000

help@nspcc.org.uk