

## Whistleblowing

"Bell House Nursery is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children and young people to be cared for and educated in."

We at Bell House Nursery understand that whistleblowing is an important aspect of Safeguarding; where staff, volunteers and students are encouraged to share genuine concerns about a colleagues' behaviour. We understand that this behaviour may not be child abuse, however the adult may not be following the code of conduct or could be pushing boundaries beyond normal limits.

We recognise that if a member of staff, volunteer or student raises concerns about a wrongdoing to an organisation they are protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. The Act applies where a worker has a reasonable belief that their disclosure tends to show one or more of the following offences or breaches.

- A criminal offence
- The breach of legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- A danger to the environment
- Deliberate covering up of information tending to show any of the above.

We at Bell House Nursery support the measures that protect whistle-blowers from any form of victimisation. We have a procedure to ensure concerns are dealt with efficiently and effectively and will do all that we can to preserve the confidentiality of the person/s who has raised a concern.

If a member of staff, volunteer or student has a concern the procedure below should be followed:

- Raise concerns with the DLS who will immediately refer this to the LADO.
- Concerns can be verbal or written, but you will be asked to log this on a record of concern form.
- Write your concerns down clearly and include the background, history, names, dates and places and the reason for the disclosure. When raising a concern, the whistle-blower needs to demonstrate that they have an honest and reasonable suspicion that malpractice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur
- LADO will respond to the concern, by carrying out an initial enquiry to decide if an investigation should take place.
- If the concern falls within the offences/breaches as listed previously these will be referred for consideration under those procedures
- Concerns may be resolved by agreed actions without the need for investigation.
- If urgent action is required, this will be taken before any investigation is carried out

We at Bell House Nursery accept that deciding to report a concern can be very difficult and uncomfortable. If a member of staff, volunteer or student makes an

allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against him/her. If however a member of staff, volunteer or student makes an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary actions may be taken against them.

Alternatively if you feel you are unable to raise your concerns with the DSL, or you feel these may not be dealt with effectively you can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing hotline on 0800 028 0285 or the Ofsted Whistleblowing hotline on 0300 1233155.

**Reviewed by Amelia Pullen and Clare Hayes**

**Reviewed: January 2023**

**Next review date: January 2024**