[Copy]Whistleblowing Policy – Stowey Bears Preschool

Stowey Bears Preschool

Whistleblowing Policy

(For Ofsted Inspection Folder - Updated 2024/2025)

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1. Policy Statement

Stowey Bears Preschool is committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity, and accountability. This policy enables employees and volunteers to raise genuine concerns about misconduct or malpractice without fear of victimisation, discrimination, or disadvantage.
This policy is underpinned by the **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA)**, which protects individuals who disclose information in the public interest.
Whistleblowing applies to concerns that relate to matters including:

- A **criminal offence**
- **Failure to comply** with legal obligations
- **Health and safety risks** to individuals or the environment
- A **miscarriage of justice**
- **Deliberate concealment** of wrongdoing

This policy is separate from the staff grievance procedure. Whistleblowing is used when the concern affects others, the organisation, or the wider public interest.

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2. Aims of This Policy

- To encourage staff to report concerns at the earliest opportunity
- To ensure concerns are taken seriously and investigated appropriately
- To reassure staff they will be protected from detriment when raising concerns in good faith
- To promote a culture of transparency and safeguarding within the setting

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3. Raising a Concern Internally

Employees or volunteers should normally report concerns to the:

Pre-School Manager

If the concern relates to the Manager, it should be reported to the:

Chairperson of the Committee

The person raising the concern will be informed of the next steps and the outcome where appropriate. All concerns will be handled sensitively and confidentially wherever possible. Concerns may be raised:

- Verbally
- In writing
- Anonymously (although this may limit the ability to investigate fully)

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4. External Reporting Options

If an individual feels unable to raise the concern internally, or believes the matter has not been handled appropriately, they may contact:

Ofsted

0300 123 1231 Staff may contact Ofsted **at any time** and **without fear of repercussion**.

Local Authority Social Care (Somerset Direct)

0300 123 2224
These bodies are prescribed under whistleblowing legislation.

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5. Protection for Whistleblowers

Stowey Bears Preschool will ensure that:

- Individuals raising concerns **in good faith** are protected under PIDA
- No employee or volunteer suffers harassment, victimisation, or disadvantage
- Confidentiality is maintained wherever possible
- Any attempt to victimise or retaliate against a whistleblower will be treated as a disciplinary matter

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6. How Concerns Will Be Handled

- Concerns will be acknowledged promptly
- An appropriate manager or committee member will investigate

- The investigation may involve reviewing documents, interviewing staff, or seeking external advice
- Outcomes may include disciplinary action, policy changes, or referral to external agencies
- The whistleblower will be informed of the outcome where appropriate and lawful

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7. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy is informed by:

- **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)**
- **EYFS Statutory Framework (2024): Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements**

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8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed **annually** or sooner if legislation or statutory guidance changes.

Policy Adoption

Provider: Stowey Bears Preschool **Date Adopted:** __ ***Review Date:*** __
Signed on behalf of the provider: Rachel Penny **Name of Signatory:** Julia Jameson **Role:** Chairperson
If you'd like, I can also prepare:

- A **one-page staff summary**
- A **parent-friendly version**
- A **flowchart** for your safeguarding board
- A **branded version** using your preschool's style

Just tell me what you want next.
Just tell me what you want next.