Tots 2 Toddlers

Whistleblowing

Intent of Policy:

Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within their setting. However, they may not express their growing concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances, it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may be just suspicion of malpractice and wrongdoing at work.

Implementation of Policy:

* Tots 2 Toddlers is committed to the highest possible standards of openness and accountability.
* In line with this commitment, we encourage employees and others with genuine concerns about any person linked with the setting and/or others (e.g. Parents/Carers) to come forward and voice those concerns.
* This policy document makes it clear that employees, Parents/Carers and others can do so without fear of reprisals.
* The Whistleblowing Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise such concerns within Tots 2 Toddlers rather than overlooking the problem.
* In the event of a staff member an allegation against another, the Whistleblowing Policy also encourages and enables them to take it through the hierarchy dependent on whom the allegation may be about. Where reporting the allegation internally is not appropriate employees are provided with the knowledge and resources to report externally.
* The procedure allows employees, Parents/Carers and outside agencies to raise concerns about the Management/Staff of Tots 2 Toddlers
* That concern may be about something that:

• Is against the policies and procedures of Tots 2 Toddlers;

• Falls below established standards of practice;

• Amounts to improper conduct;

• Is a Health and Safety risk, including risks to the public as well as children, other colleagues, Parents/Carers and others.

• Contradicts Tots 2 Toddlers’ Code of Conduct.

• Contributes to a safeguarding risk involving children in the care of Tots 2 Toddlers.

Harassment and Victimisation

* Tots 2 Toddlers recognise that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal.
* Tots 2 Toddlers 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 Employees Handbook, or Complaints Policy.
* This does not mean that if you are already the subject of disciplinary or redundancy procedures, that those procedures will be halted as a result of your whistleblowing.
* This applies to Parents/Carers of the setting who then decide to seek alternative childcare.

Confidentiality

* Tots 2 Toddlers will do its best to protect your identity when you raise a concern.
* However, it must be appreciated that, in the interests of natural justice, any investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by you may be required as part of the evidence.

Anonymous Allegations

* You are strongly encouraged to put your name to any allegation.
* Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful.
* Anonymous allegations will be considered and any action taken at the discretion of Tots 2 Toddlers and in conjunction with the relevant agencies where appropriate.

In exercising this discretion, the following factors will be taken into account when considering how to deal with any allegations:

• The seriousness of the issues raised;

• The credibility of the allegation;

• The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

 Malicious or Vexatious Allegations

* If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you.
* If, however, you make a malicious or vexatious allegation, disciplinary action may be taken against you in accordance with the Tots 2 Toddlers’ Procedures.

Procedure:

* As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with a member of the management team or the Designated Safeguarding Lead; DSL.
* This depends, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who you think may be involved in the malpractice.
* For example, if you believe that your DSL is involved, you should approach the Manager. If you believe the Manager is involved, you should approach the owner of Tots 2 Toddlers.
* With specific regard to Safeguarding issues, that may involve a member of staff, you should initially consult with the management team and DSL of Tots 2 Toddlers.
* If you suspect they or the owner may be related to the issue you should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer; LADO, and/or the Police.
* Concerns are better raised in writing.
* You are advised to set out background and history of your concerns, giving names, dates and places, where possible, and the reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation being as factual as possible.
* The earlier you express your concern, the easier it is action to be taken.
* Although you are not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, you will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are sufficient grounds for initial enquiries to be made.

 How Tots 2 Toddlers will Respond

The action taken by Tots 2 Toddlers will depend on the nature of the concern. Concerns that fall within the scope of specific procedures (e.g. Safeguarding or discrimination issues) will normally be referred for consideration under those procedures.

* In order to protect individuals, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take.
* Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for an investigation. The following process will be followed in the event of complaints:
* Tots 2 Toddlers will ensure that a letter is sent to confirm the receipt of the complaint.
* The complaint will then be fully investigated and within 5 days of when the complaint was first received.
* Tots 2 Toddlers endeavour to investigate all complaints in a non-discriminatory manner.
* A letter will be sent detailing how Tots 2 Toddlers has dealt with the complaint.

In the event an allegation is made against a member of staff the matters raised may;

• Be referred to the Police;

• The LADO will be informed within 24 hours of the allegation;

• OFSTED will be informed of the allegation and any steps taken following the allegation within 14 days;

* Allegations referred directly to the LADO will follow local safeguarding children board procedure, to ensure that the allegation is investigated thoroughly. The LADO will inform the police and/or children’s social care if required.
* The LADO and OFSTED team will work in partnership to investigate the allegation externally, as an internal investigation may compromise future court proceedings.
* Any person who is the subject of an allegation may be asked to leave the premises without notification and without being given the reason as to why they are being asked to leave.
* In this case, Tots 2 Toddlers will keep in touch with the individual and support them during their absence.
* They will also be informed of any inquiries that they will be asked to be involved with.

How the Matter can be Taken Further

If the complaint has not been dealt with in a manner which is satisfactory to the employee, Parent/Carer or others involved, then they can contact OFSTED directly at the following address.

WBHL, Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester

M1 2WD

Ofsted Whistleblowing tel: 0300 123 3155

Ofsted TEL: 0300 123 1231 (Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm)

Ofsted Text-Phone: 0161 618 8524

Web: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk.

By registering a formal complaint with OFSTED an Officer in most cases will be sent to the Nursery to carry out a further investigation. If applicable, a report would then be sent with action points.

CONTACT DETAILS – Safeguarding allegations.

Local Authority Designated Officer;

Phone: 01962 876364

Email: child.protection@hants.gov.uk

Online LADO notification form: [www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/safeguardingchildren/allegations](http://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/safeguardingchildren/allegations)

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| Review Date: | Signed: | Next Review Due: |
| 01/09/2021 | H Waller | 01/09/2022 |