Crossroads Nursery – Whistleblowing Policy

This policy is in place to ensure that staff feel confident and are encouraged to reveal any concerns that they may have about the conduct and behaviour of other members of staff, including the SLT in relation to acting in the best interests and wellbeing of children and staff at Crossroads Nursery.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989): Article 3: (Best interests of the child): The best interests of children must be the primary concern in making decisions that may affect them. All adults should do what is best for children. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

This policy should only be used for dealing with major concerns over the conduct of other members of staff. It should not be used to report personal grievances, harassment, disciplinary matters, bullying or any other matters that can be dealt with using Aberdeenshire's disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Who can raise a concern?

- Any member of staff who has a reasonable belief that there is some malpractice relating to any of the issues mentioned below is entitled to raise a concern.
    - A criminal offence
    - Breach of a legal obligation
    - Miscarriage of justice
    - Danger to health and safety of any individual
    - Malpractice
    - Fraud
    - Improper conduct / unethical behaviour
    - Attempts to suppress or conceal any information relating to the above
    - Child protection concerns
- Concerns raised must be done so without malice and in good faith. You must reasonably believe that any information disclosed and any allegations made are true. You will not be expected to prove beyond any reasonable doubt that the allegation is true but you will need to demonstrate that there are reasonable grounds for your concern.
- If you make an allegation in good faith but it is not confirmed by any subsequent investigation then no action will be taken against you.
- If you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, then appropriate disciplinary or legal action may be taken against you.
- All concerns raised will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal the identity of the person who raised the concern. However at the appropriate time the individual who made the allegation may need to come forward as a witness.
- Any individual who raises a concern in good faith will be protected from any possible reprisals or victimisation. Where this occurs the individual should report it using Aberdeenshire Grievance Procedures.

Raising a concern:

- Any concerns should be reported to the Head Teacher. If the allegation involves the Head Teacher, then the concern should be raised with the Quality Improvement Officer for your setting. Out with term time staff may contact the Quality Improvement Officer for the Early Years.

- You may wish to discuss your concern with a colleague in confidence first and you may find it easier to raise the matter if there are two (or more) of you who have the same experience or concerns.
- Concerns should be raised verbally or in writing. In both instances you will be required to state:
    a) The background and history of the concern
    b) The reason you are concerned
    c) The extent to which you have personally witnessed or experienced the problem.
- The HT and / or QIO will decide whether the allegation falls within the scope of existing Aberdeenshire policies and procedures.
- The HT and / or QIO will consider the complaint and decide whether there is a case to answer.
- If there is a case to answer the HT and / QIO will proceed using Aberdeenshire Policy.
- You may wish to invite your trade union or a colleague to be present during any meetings or interview in connection with the concerns you have.

You may also complain directly to the Care Commission: 0345 600 9527

Training on whistleblowing can be found at: https://aldo.aberdeenshire.gov.uk

National Policy/Guidance:

Care Inspectorate, 2014, "Whistleblowing: Guidance to support the code of conduct"
http://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/2701/Item%2016%20-%20Appendix%202.pdf

Aberdeenshire Policy/ Guidance:

Aberdeenshire Council, 2017, "Disclosure of Information (Whistleblowing) Policy"

http://arcadialite.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/WhistleblowingPolicy.pdf