

Whistle blowing policy

Belton Playgroup is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability. In line with that commitment, we encourage employees and others with serious concerns about any aspect of the settings' operations to come forward and voice those concerns.

This policy document makes it clear that employees can confidently report their concern without fear of reprisal. It is intended that this policy will encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within the setting rather than overlooking a problem or it causing them anxiety at work.

Procedure:

Staff have the right and individual responsibility to raise any matters of concern regarding poor practice at work. Staff are responsible for safety and well-being of all children attending the Playgroup and this takes priority over loyalty towards colleagues.

General Principals:

This policy is intended to

- Encourage and enable individuals to raise genuine and legitimate concerns
- Support staff to take an active role in the elimination of poor practice
- Ensure concerns are appropriately investigated
- Protect those making the complaint from victimisation or retaliation

This policy is linked to our Safeguarding Policy.

The manager will investigate promptly and thoroughly, all concerns that are raised in accordance with this policy and will take appropriate action.

Confidentiality:

The management will do its best to protect a person's identity when a concern is raised, however, in some circumstances identities will have to be revealed to the complainee and the complainant may be asked to provide written or verbal evidence in support of their complaint. If a person's identity is to be disclosed, he or she will be told before the disclosure and the

reasons why this is necessary. Once the concerns have been raised, we expect that the complainant will not talk about this to any other person inside or outside the setting.

Anonymous Complaints:

When a concern is expressed anonymously it is much less powerful and harder to investigate. However, they may still be considered and looked at.

Untrue allegations:

If an allegation is made in good faith but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against the complainant.

If, however, an allegation proves to be malicious, the disciplinary procedure will be followed (See Staff Handbook).

How to raise a concern:

In the first instance, concerns should be raised with the Playgroup Manager - Sam Dexter or the Designated Safeguarding Lead - Vanessa Cook. If the concerns are with either of these staff members then the Playgroup Chair should be contacted. Concerns are best raised in writing, included in this should be the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates, places where possible and the reason why you are particularly concerned. The earlier you express your concerns the easier it is to take action.

If you do not wish to put the allegations in writing, the person to whom you are making the complaint will make a written record of the interview and will ask you to sign to confirm accuracy of the notes taken.

Although you will not be expected to prove the truth of your allegations, you will be required to demonstrate that there are sufficient grounds for your concern.

You should not:

- Investigate the matter yourself
- Alert those suspected of being involved
- Approach or accuse individuals
- Tell anyone other than the designated person's i.e. manager, DSL or chair

Within a week of the receipt of your concern, you will receive a written acknowledgement of your concern, with a copy of your statement where appropriate.

The Manager will investigate your concern and within 2 weeks you will be informed of what action is being taken and you will be kept up to date on the progress of the investigation.

You will also be informed of the outcome of any investigation.

If you feel unable to raise an issue with the manager or chair, or feel that your genuine concerns are not being addressed, other channels are open to you:

- Contact the LADO (Local Authority Duty Officer on 0116 305 4141 CFS-LADO@leics.gov.uk).
- NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available. Staff can call 0800 0280285 - 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is: help@nspcc.org.uk.
- Alternatively, you can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH.
- Ofsted provides guidance on how to make complaints about a childcare provider: Complaints procedure - Ofsted - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).
- General guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Belton Playgroup Association:

Held on: 2nd June 2026

Signed on behalf of committee:



Name and role of signatory: Anna Spencer, Chair of Committee

Review date: April 2027

