



WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

Definition

Whistle blowing is a way for employees at Stepping Stones to raise reasonably and honestly held concerns they may have about the professional conduct of another individual e.g. Member of Staff, Committee Member, Volunteer or Visiting Professional.

Stepping Stones is committed to delivering a high quality Specialist Early Years Service which promotes good communication, organisational and accountability and maintains public confidence. As employers we endeavour to be honest and transparent and seek to develop and maintain trusting relationships with our service users, stakeholders and staff.

It is our intention that staff at Stepping Stones feel confident about reporting any issues/concerns that they may have regarding:

- Inappropriate treatment or care of a child
- Inappropriate/unprofessional behaviour of the staff, volunteers, students, committee members or visiting professionals
- Discrimination of any kind
- Criminal or fraudulent practice
- Activity likely to impact on the safety, health or wellbeing of any child or adult
- Activities likely to bring Stepping Stones into disrepute

without fear of possible reprisal, discrimination or victimization. All employees will be treated fairly.

Any disclosure made in good faith will be protected. Every effort will be made to keep both the concern and the Whistleblowers identity confidential.

Concerns can be raised by any staff member, volunteer to their line manager or the Centre manager or staff representative on the Management Committee and will be dealt with in the following way:

- Initial enquires will be made to decide if any investigation is appropriate
- The concern will be investigated by the Manager and or the Committee and resolved as quickly as possible.

In the event that an employee feels the matter cannot be discussed with the Manager they should contact either:

- *Staff Representative on Management Committee – Judy Hennessey*
- *The Chairman of Management Committee: **Martin Coles on 01225 341132** or*
- *OFSTED: Whistle Blower Hotline on 0300 123 3155 or*
- *Designated Officer for Allegations 01225 713945*
- *NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line 0800 028 0285*

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