



## **WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY**

Alfresco childcare is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all colleagues and volunteers to share this commitment. This document should be read in conjunction with the Alfresco Safeguarding Policy.

It is important that everyone is able to raise concerns about what seems to be poor or unsafe practice by colleagues and that those concerns along with concerns expressed by children, parents or others are listened to and taken seriously. Children can be subjected to abuse by those who work with them in any nursery. All allegations of abuse or maltreatment of children by a professional, colleague, or volunteer must therefore be taken seriously and treated in accordance with consistent procedures.

Alfresco childcare has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) or Manager at the earliest opportunity.

### **Phones and cameras**

- No phones other than official nursery phones are allowed to be used within the rooms where children are present.
- Parents are requested to not use phones while on the premises; during functions parents are asked as a group if they will allow other parents to take photos on the understanding that none are published or posted on social media networks.
- Parents are asked for permission for photographs to be taken for learning journeys, displays, facebook and nursery records on the admission forms.
- The nursery provides a camera for evidence of children's experiences

Failure to comply with this policy could result in disciplinary proceedings for gross misconduct which, if proven, will result in dismissal.

### **PROCEDURES**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Sara Dibley (Manager)

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Justin Robins (Deputy Manager)

These individuals are responsible for Safeguarding and any concerns should be brought to them immediately.

## **Local Safeguarding Children Boards**

The Swindon Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) have responsibility for ensuring there are effective inter-agency procedures in place for dealing with allegations against people who work with children, and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of those procedures.

## **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Children can be subjected to abuse by those who work with them in any nursery. All allegations of abuse or maltreatment of children by a professional, colleague, student, or volunteer must therefore be taken seriously and treated in accordance with consistent procedures.

LSCBs have responsibility for ensuring there are effective procedures in place for dealing with allegations against people who work with children, and providing advice and guidance to nurseries, liaising with the police and other agencies. They monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible and that the process is thorough and fair.

The local authority designates an officer to support nurseries when they receive allegations against a colleague. This is the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

## **Reporting Allegations**

Allegations or concerns that a colleague or volunteer may have abused a child should be reported immediately to the nursery's DSL.

The LADO should also be informed immediately of all allegations that come to the attention of the nursery's DSL or that are made directly to the police.

The DSL will need to apply common sense and professional judgement; they will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who will give guidance and advice on the next steps. This should be completed in full knowledge of the nursery manager/owner unless the allegation is against them.

Some allegations will be so serious as to require immediate referral to children's social care and/or the police for investigation. Others may be much less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation, or enquiries by children's social care. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are seen to be followed up.

If the parents/carers of the child concerned are not already aware of the allegation, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will advise how and by whom they should be informed. However, in some circumstances the DSL may need to advise parents of an incident involving their child straight away, for example if the child has been injured while in the nursery's care and requires medical treatment.

We all have a responsibility to protect children and if after reporting a concern an individual does not feel that their concern has been given due consideration they should contact the LADO or the Police directly.

- If you have concerns regarding issues to do with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and it is in circumstances where it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an outside body call our whistleblowing hotline on 0300 1233155 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) or
- email [whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk)

- write to: WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

Or the NSPCC have a Whistleblowing helpline 0800 028 0285 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

General guidance on whistle blowing can be found via [Whistleblowing for employees: What is a whistleblower - GOV.UK](#)

## **RECORDING AN ALLEGATION AGAINST A COLLEAGUE**

- The person making the allegation should make an objective record on FORM A (see safeguarding policy) with the support of the DSL.
- These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the DSL, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.
- At this stage, NO other investigations should take place until after advice has been sought from the LADO.

## **INFORMING PARENTS**

If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents must be informed following the report to Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or as soon as reasonably practicable, no later than on the collection of the child.

## **PROCEEDINGS**

The possible risk of harm to children posed by an accused person needs to be effectively evaluated and managed – in respect of the child(ren) involved in the allegations, and any other children in the individual's home, work or community life.

The DSL will remove the colleague from duties and ask them to leave the premises until advice has been sought from the LADO. Following advice Alfresco Childcare will take necessary steps including, if required, to suspend the employee.

IF YOU SUSPECT THE ALLEGATION IS A CRIMINAL OFFENCE DO NOT LET THE COLLEAGUE LEAVE THE PREMISES OF HAVE ACCESS TO ANY PHONE OR COMPUTER UNTIL AFTER SPEAKING WITH THE LADO.

In some cases, it will require Alfresco Childcare to consider suspending the person. The DSL must seek advice and support from appropriate HR support services.

The DSL should keep the person who is the subject of the allegations informed of the progress of the case, and arrange to provide appropriate support to the staff member while the case is on-going.

Children's services will make enquiries to determine whether the child or children named in the allegation are in need of protection or services so that any information obtained in the course of those enquiries which are relevant to a disciplinary case can be passed to Alfresco Childcare or regulatory body without delay.

## **RESIGNATIONS**

The fact that a person tenders his or her resignation, or ceases to provide their services, must not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with these procedures. It is important that every effort is made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations impacting on the safety or welfare of children, including any in which the person concerned refuses to co-operate with the process.

## **TIMESCALES**

It is in everyone's interest to resolve cases as quickly as possible consistent with a fair and thorough investigation. Every effort should be made to manage cases to avoid any unnecessary delay.

## **INFORMATION SHARING**

The DSL must inform the manager/owner of each step taken.

## **INFORMING OFSTED**

The nursery manager must inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere) and any action taken. These notifications must be made as soon as is possible, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made, using the appropriate forms where necessary. The Registered Person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with this requirement, commits a criminal offence.

Date reviewed: 5<sup>th</sup> October 2026

Reviewed by: Sara Dibley