



Young Friends Kindergarten

Whistleblowing Policy

Reviewed: August 2025

Next Review: August 2026

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Our Values

Safeguarding depends on every one of us. Our approach to whistleblowing is shaped by:

- **Sustainability** – Protecting children and upholding ethical practice long-term.
 - **Respect** – Everyone has the right to work in a safe, open, and professional environment.
 - **Authenticity** – Concerns are addressed with honesty and integrity.
 - **Supportive Leadership** – Speaking up is encouraged and responded to with care.
 - **Community** – We all play a part in protecting children and one another.
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Policy Statement

At Young Friends, we are committed to safeguarding children and promoting the highest standards of care, honesty and conduct. If you see, hear or suspect anything that may place a child at risk, **you must report it immediately**. This policy ensures you feel confident and supported to do so.

Clear Requirement: Safeguarding First

Every member of staff is legally and morally required to report safeguarding concerns immediately.

This includes:

- Harm or potential harm to a child.
- Unsafe or inappropriate conduct by any adult.
- Concerns about another member of staff's behaviour, including managers.
- Concerns about unsafe practice or failures to follow safeguarding policy.
- Concerns about a colleague **speaking inappropriately, using an unkind or overly firm tone, or treating a child or colleague in a way that does not align with our ethos of respect and kindness.**

You **do not need proof** — if you are unsure, always report and let the Designated Safeguarding Lead decide next steps.

Purpose of This Policy

- To protect children by making sure all concerns are raised.
 - To protect staff who raise concerns in good faith.
 - To provide a clear process for escalating issues safely.
 - To ensure transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.
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Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Young Friends employees.
 - Volunteers, apprentices, contractors, and work experience students.
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What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is when a staff member raises a concern about wrongdoing or poor practice that affects others — especially safeguarding or safety concerns.

Concerns might include:

- Abuse, neglect or harm.
- Unsafe or poor quality practice.
- Unsafe equipment or environments.
- Bullying, humiliation or discrimination.
- Speaking to a child or colleague in an unkind, belittling, or overly firm way.
- Failure to follow legal obligations or policies.
- Deliberate concealment of information.
- A colleague being unfit to work with children.

This is not the same as:

- Personal disagreements.
- Personality clashes.
- Gossip or “telling tales” that does not relate to safety, safeguarding, or serious conduct.

Examples of Whistleblowing in Daily Practice

- Noticing a colleague repeatedly leaves children unsupervised.
- Seeing unsafe handling of a child (e.g., rough or inappropriate restraint).
- Hearing a colleague speak sharply, intimidate, or talk down to a child or colleague.
- Finding a safety hazard in the garden that is being ignored.
- Observing a colleague using their phone for personal reasons while supervising children.
- A staff member consistently ignoring hygiene rules in food prep.
- A manager disregarding a safeguarding concern raised by a team member.

How to Report a Concern

Step 1: Report to Management

- Raise the concern immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Manager.
- Use the safeguarding concern form or raise the issue in person.
- Be factual, professional and honest.

If you are concerned that your report won't be acted on:

Step 2: Escalate

- Contact the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer):
☎ 07584 217271
✉ ladoenquiries@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Step 3: Contact Authorities

- For urgent safeguarding concerns out of hours, contact the Police.
- You may also contact:
 - **NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline:** 0800 028 0285
 - **Ofsted:** 0300 123 1231

Confidentiality and Support

- All concerns are treated in confidence.
- You are protected from victimisation or dismissal under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- If you raise a concern in good faith, you will be supported — even if the concern is not upheld.
- You can report anonymously, although this may limit our ability to investigate.

False Allegations

Deliberate false reports made to cause harm will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

Recording and Monitoring

- All whistleblowing concerns are recorded securely and reviewed by leadership.
- Concerns may result in disciplinary action, referral to the LADO, or external investigation.
- Any **upheld** concern is treated as serious and will be addressed under our Disciplinary Policy, which may include formal warnings or dismissal.
- Outcomes are shared with the whistleblower where appropriate.

What Happens Next?

Depending on the concern, outcomes may include:

- Investigation by leadership.
- LADO or Ofsted referral.
- Suspension or safeguarding procedures.
- Staff training or policy changes.
- Support for children or families.

Linked Policies

- Safeguarding Children.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Disciplinary.
- Whistleblowing Flowchart.
- LADO Procedures.
- Whistleblowing Poster in staff area.