



St Bede's Childcare Ltd

Whistleblowing Policy

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement:

Providers must take all necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. (EYFS 2024, 3.4–3.7)

Policy Statement

St Bede's Childcare is committed to maintaining the highest standards of care and safeguarding. We recognise that staff are often the first to identify concerns and must feel confident to raise these without fear of reprisal.

This policy encourages all staff to report concerns about poor practice, unsafe behaviour, or wrongdoing, including **safeguarding concerns**, in the best interests of children.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Encourage staff to raise concerns promptly
- Ensure concerns are taken seriously and investigated
- Protect staff from victimisation when raising concerns in good faith
- Promote a culture of openness, transparency, and accountability

Scope

This policy covers concerns about:

- Safeguarding practice or concerns about a child's welfare
- Behaviour or conduct of staff or management
- Unsafe practice or breaches of policy
- Illegal or unethical activity
- Poor standards of care

Safeguarding concerns must always be treated as a priority.

Safeguarding and Whistleblowing

- Any concern relating to the welfare of a child must be reported **immediately**
- Staff must report concerns to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**
- If the concern involves the DSL, it must be reported to senior management or the **Childcare Director**

Allegations Against Staff



- Any concerns about a staff member must be reported immediately
- The setting will follow procedures and contact the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** where appropriate

How to Raise a Concern

Staff should:

1. Raise concerns with:
 - The Manager, or
 - The Deputy Manager
2. If the concern involves management:
 - Report to the **Childcare Director**
3. Concerns can be raised:
 - Verbally (immediate concerns)
 - In writing (where possible, with details such as dates, names, and incidents)

Staff are not expected to prove allegations but must have a **reasonable belief** that concerns are valid.

Response to Concerns

Management will:

- Acknowledge concerns promptly
- Assess and investigate appropriately
- Take action in line with safeguarding procedures
- Refer concerns to:
 - Ofsted
 - Police
 - LADO
 - Other relevant agencies

Staff will receive feedback where appropriate, in line with confidentiality requirements.

Confidentiality

- All concerns will be handled sensitively
- The identity of the person raising the concern will be protected where possible
- In some cases, disclosure may be necessary as part of an investigation



Anonymous Concerns

- Anonymous concerns will be considered
- However, they may be more difficult to investigate

Protection for Staff

- Staff raising concerns in good faith will be protected from:
 - Victimisation
 - Harassment
 - Detrimental treatment
- Any such behaviour will be treated as a disciplinary matter

Malicious Allegations

- No action will be taken against staff who raise genuine concerns
- However, deliberately false or malicious allegations may result in disciplinary action

Escalation

If a staff member feels their concern has not been addressed, they may contact:

- **Ofsted**
- **Local Authority (including LADO)**
- **Police**
- Relevant professional bodies

Monitoring and Review

- The Manager will monitor the effectiveness of this policy
- Staff will receive training and guidance
- This policy will be reviewed annually