**Policy**

Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery is committed to being open, honest, and accountable. It encourages a free and open culture between all team members.

This Policy aims to help leaders, team members and volunteers to raise any serious concerns they may have about colleagues or their employer with confidence and without having to worry about being victimised, discriminated against, or disadvantaged in any way as a result.

It is written in the context of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which protects employees who ‘blow the whistle’ on malpractices within their organisation.

**What Types of Concerns?**

The policy is intended to deal with serious or sensitive concerns about allegations, such as the following:

* A criminal offence
* Concern of staff practice and conduct
* Failure of a safeguarding procedure or other regulatory requirement
* A failure to comply with any legal obligation
* A miscarriage of justice
* Unauthorised use of the company’s money
* Breaches and abuses of policy
* Fraud, bribery, or corruption
* The mistreatment of service users
* Use of alcohol & illegal drugs

Or concealment of any of the above.

It is not necessary for individuals who raise the concern to prove the wrongdoing that is alleged to have occurred or is likely to occur. However, if an individual knowingly or maliciously makes an untrue allegation (e.g., in order to cause disruption within the company), the setting will take appropriate disciplinary action against them. It may constitute gross misconduct.

This policy does not deal with any complaints staff may have about their employment position or personal circumstances such as the way they have been treated at work. This should be dealt with through the Investigation, Disciplinary & Grievance Policy.

**Procedure**

**When raising your concern,** it is advisable that you report your concern as early as possible. A significant delay in reporting the matter may make the subsequent investigation difficult to pursue. Please note you do not have to work through these in order and can jump to step 3 should you think this is appropriate.

**Step 1**

As a first step, you should report any concerns to **the Nursery Manager.**

Individuals are encouraged to raise their concerns verbally with the Nursery Manager, and follow up where required in writing, setting out the background and history of their concerns (giving names, dates, and places where possible, please use the ‘record of allegation form’) outlining their concerns.

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| **Contact details** |
| Nursery Manager: Lucy Eaton/Demi Nicholson01920 487200 manager@monkeypuzzleware.co.uk |

**Ensure your concerns are recorded in writing using the ‘Record of Allegation form’.**

**If you feel hesitant about putting your concerns in writing at this stage,** you should speak to the Nursery Manager to whom you wish to make the report and arrange to meet with him/her. However, you may be asked to put the details in writing at a later stage.

**Step 2**

If the matter concerns the Nursery Manager, or they feel they cannot share their concern with them, they must share their concern with the Nursery Franchisee. In the instance where the Nursery Manager is the manager and franchisee, the individual can contact their Early Years Quality Manager, you may report the matter, in the manner set out in Step 1 above to:

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| **Contact details** |
| Nursery Franchisee: Swati Naidu – 07859 919516Early Years Quality Manager: Kelly Norfolk - 07398519410 |

**Step 3**

If you are not confident in approaching any of the named persons in steps one or two then, in order to raise your concern, **YOU CAN AT ANY STAGE CONTACT**:

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| **Contact details** |
| Local Authority LADO: **0300 123 4043** |
| NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 0280285 |
| Ofsted: 0300 123 1231 |

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for an individual to report their concerns to an external body such as a regulator. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to someone external.

If any individual is unsure about whether to use this procedure, or they want independent advice at any stage, they should contact:

* Their nursery Designated Safeguarding Lead
* Early Years Quality Manager
* Monkey Puzzle Safeguarding Team
* Monkey Puzzle Head Office
* External agencies: LADO, MASH, OFSTED
* The NSPCC anonymous whistleblowing advice line (details at the end of this policy)

**Protecting the Individual Raising the Concern**

Monkey Puzzle aims to encourage openness and will support whistleblowers who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

Whistleblowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a concern.  If an individual believes they have suffered any such treatment, they should inform the nursery manager immediately. If the matter is not resolved, the individual should raise it formally through the Investigations, Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure.  Staff must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. If staff are involved in such conduct, they may be subject to disciplinary action.

If an individual wants the matter to be treated confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret and only reveal it where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern or where there is a legal obligation for us to do so.

Concerns raised anonymously can pose difficulties when investigating, we strongly encourage our team members to feel confident in sharing their concerns in line with our investigation, disciplinary and grievance policy.

**Useful Contacts**

**Early Years Quality Manager**

**Name:** Kelly Norfolk
**Tel:** 07398519410

**Email:** kelly.norfolk@mpdn.co.uk

**Alternative Email:** eyqm@mpdn.co.uk

**Monkey Puzzle Head Office**

**Tel:** 01442 878 887

**Ofsted Whistleblowing**

**Tel:** 0300 123 3155

**Email:** whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

**Address:** WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

**PROTECT**

**Tel:**020 3117 2520

**Website:**https://protect-advice.org.uk/

**NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line**

**Tel:** 0808 800 500

**Email:** help@nspcc.org.uk

**Further guidance**

* NSPCC Website <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

**Linked Policies**

* Safeguarding Code of Conduct
* Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
* Allegations Against Staff Policy
* Complaints Policy
* Investigations, Grievance and Disciplinary Policy