

Whistleblowing Policy



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 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 and now explicitly includes reporting sexual harassment as a protected disclosure.

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 or illegal drugs
- Sexual harassment – including concerns that it *has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur*.

Or concealment of any of the above.

Important: Raising a concern about sexual harassment is explicitly protected. Employees who disclose information relating to sexual harassment must not suffer any detriment as a result of speaking up.

It is not necessary for individuals who raise the concern to prove the wrongdoing that is alleged. However, knowingly or maliciously raising an untrue allegation may result in disciplinary action and could constitute gross misconduct.

This policy does not deal with personal employment complaints (e.g., how someone has been treated at work). These are managed through the Investigation, Disciplinary & Grievance Policy.

Procedure

Employees should report concerns as early as possible. A delay may make an investigation more difficult.

You do not need to follow steps in order — you can go straight to Step 3 where appropriate.

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Step 1

Report concerns to the Nursery Manager.

Concerns should be raised verbally first, and followed up in writing where required, using the "Record of Allegation" form.

If you cannot put your concern in writing initially, you may be asked to provide written details later.

Step 2

If the concern relates to the Nursery Manager, or you do not feel comfortable raising it with them, you should raise it with the Nursery Franchisee.

If the Nursery Manager and Franchisee are the same person, the concern should be raised with the Early Years Quality Manager (EYQM).

Step 3

If you do not feel able to raise the concern with any of the above, you can raise concerns externally at any time with:

- Local Authority LADO
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line
- Ofsted

External disclosures should only be made when appropriate and, ideally, after seeking advice.

If You Are Unsure

If you are unsure whether this policy applies, you can seek confidential advice from:

- Nursery Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Early Years Quality Manager
- Monkey Puzzle Safeguarding Team
- Monkey Puzzle Head Office
- External agencies: LADO, MASH, Ofsted
- NSPCC whistleblowing advice line

Protecting the Individual Raising the Concern

Monkey Puzzle encourages openness and will support whistleblowers who raise genuine concerns — even if they turn out to be mistaken.

Employees who report sexual harassment are legally protected, and must not suffer any detriment or disadvantage for raising such concerns.

If you believe you have suffered detriment after raising a concern — particularly involving sexual harassment — you must inform the Nursery Manager or a Senior member of staff immediately, and may raise this formally via the Investigations, Disciplinary & Grievance Policy.

Staff must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way.



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If confidentiality is requested, every effort will be made to protect your identity unless disclosure is legally required.

Anonymous concerns can be more difficult to investigate, and team members are encouraged to share their concerns confidentially so they can be properly addressed.

Useful Contacts

Early Years Quality Manager

Name: [Insert EYQM name here]

Tel: [Insert EYQM telephone number here]

Email: [Insert EYQM email address here]

Alternative Email: eyqm@mpdn.co.uk

Monkey Puzzle Head Office

Email: info@mpdn.co.uk

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