

10.14 Whistle Blowing Policy

Definition: Whistle blowing is raising a concern about malpractice within an organisation or through an independent structure associated with it (UK Committee on Standards in Public Life).

Protection: As a member of the Early Years Alliance, Roman River Pre-School is committed to delivering a high quality pre-school service, promoting organisational accountability and maintaining public confidence.

This policy provides individuals in the workplace with protection from victimisation or punishment where they raise a genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice in the organisation. The policy is underpinned by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which encourages people to raise concerns about misconduct or malpractice in the workplace, in order to promote good governance and accountability in the public interest. The Act covers behaviour, which amounts to:

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with any legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- Danger to health and safety of an individual and/or environment
- Deliberate concealment of information about any of the above

It is not intended that this policy be a substitute for, or an alternative to the group's formal Grievance Procedure, but is designed to nurture a culture of openness and transparency within the organisation, which makes it safe and acceptable for employees and volunteers to raise, in good faith, a concern they may have about misconduct or malpractice.

Employees and volunteers are entitled to expect fair and reasonable treatment from their employer and colleagues. This group has in place formal procedures that paid or unpaid staff can use if they feel they have been unfairly treated or discriminated against. Employees and volunteers can seek advice from a Trade Union, a lawyer, or other as they see fit.

This group accepts that there may be rare occasions in the organisation when situations arise which are illegal, improper or unethical, or which are otherwise in conflict with our codes of practice. The group is committed to providing paid and unpaid staff with an effective mechanism for dealing with such situations.

Any employee or volunteer who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise such a concern should normally report the matter to their Supervisor or Pre-School Manager who will advise the employee or volunteer of the action he or she will take in response to the concerns expressed. Concerns should be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible.

If an employee or volunteer feels the matter cannot be discussed with their Supervisor or Pre-School Manager, he or she should report it to the Chairperson of the Committee. The Chairperson will decide, in consultation where necessary with EYA and/or Ofsted, what action is to be taken. This may include whether the issue raised can be dealt with through the group's own Grievance Procedure.

