

## Whistle-blowing Policy

Knutz Out of School Club is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability. If a member of staff discovers evidence of malpractice or wrongdoing within the Club they can disclose this information internally without fear of reprisal.

Our Whistleblowing policy is intended to cover such concerns as:

- Financial malpractice or fraud
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation
- Dangers to health and safety or the environment
- Criminal activity
- Improper conduct or unethical behaviour

This policy should not be used to question business decisions made by the Club, or to raise any matters that are covered under other policies (e.g. discrimination or racial harassment). Any allegations relating to child protection will follow the procedures set out in the **Safeguarding Children policy**. Any concerns relating to the employment conditions of an individual member of staff should be raised according to the procedures set out in the **Staff Grievance** policy.

### Raising a concern

Ideally the staff member should put his or her allegations in writing, setting out the background to the situation, giving names, dates and places where possible, and the reason why they are concerned about the situation. In the first instance concerns should be taken to the Club's owner. If this is not possible, due to the nature of the problem, consult your local authority Early Years advisor at Herts for Learning for advice. If this person or body is unwilling or unable to act on the concern, the staff member should then raise it with:

- Ofsted (if it concerns the safe and effective running of the club)
- The Local Authority Designated Officer or the Local Safeguarding Children Board (if it concerns a child protection issue and is not already covered by the procedure set out in the Club's Safeguarding Children policy)
- Ultimately, with the police (if a crime is thought to have been committed).

If the member of staff is still uncertain about how to proceed with the concern, he or she can contact the whistle-blowing charity Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work) for advice.

### Responding to a concern

Initial enquiries will usually involve a meeting with the individual raising the concern, and will decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. If a concern relates to issues which fall within the scope of other policies, it will be addressed under those policies.

If the initial meeting does not resolve the concern, further investigation is required. The appropriate person will investigate the concerns thoroughly, ensuring that a written response can be provided within ten working days where feasible, or if this is not possible, giving a date by which the final response can be expected. The response should include details of how the matter was investigated, conclusions drawn from the investigation, and who to contact if the member of staff is unhappy with the response and wishes to take the matter further.

### Rights and responsibilities of the whistle-blower

All concerns will be treated in confidence and the Club will make every effort not to reveal the identity of anyone raising a concern in good faith. At the appropriate time, however, the member of staff may need to come forward as a witness.

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If a member of staff raises a concern in good faith which is then not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against that person.

If the investigation concludes that the member of staff maliciously fabricated the allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against that person.

### Contact information

**Herts for Learning (HfL)** Watford/Three Rivers Early Years Advisors

Caroline Luck 01438 844374 or 07879 604409 caroline.luck@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Rosie Bloomfield 01438 844086 or 07760 353085 rosemary.bloomfield@hertsforlearning.co.uk

**Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:** 0300 123 4043 or 01992 588757

**LADO** (Local Authority Designated Officer): 0300 123 4043 or 01992 588757

Website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/childrens-social-care/child-protection/hertfordshire-safeguarding-children-board/contact-us>

**Ofsted** (Complaints, Investigations, Enforcement): 0300 123 1231

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

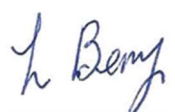
**Protect** (formerly Public Concern at Work): 020 3117 2520

Website: <https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

### Related policies

**Staff Grievance policy, Safeguarding Children policy**

Policy adopted by	<b>Knutz Out of School Club</b>
Date adopted	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021
Due for review	September 2023

Signed:   
Owner/Manager