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Document.	0033	Public Interest or Whistle Blowing Policy		
Revision	01	Approved By	P Whateley	Approval Date 02/01/14

Scope

This policy applies to all provision for early years aged children, and also – where appropriate – to before and after school provision and walking bus provided by Duchy Pre-school and Playgroup for primary school aged children attending The Duchy School in Bowley Meadow.

Statement of Intent

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 was enacted to ensure a climate of greater frankness between employers and workers so that irregularities can be identified and addressed quickly and to strengthen employment rights by protecting responsible workers who blow the whistle about wrongdoing or failures in the workplace.

Policy & Procedure

Employees may well be the first to realise that something seriously wrong may be happening within the workplace. However, they may not express their concerns either because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues and the Pre-school or because they fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances, it may be easier to ignore the concern than to report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice.

The Duchy Pre-school and Playgroup is committed to the highest possible standards of openness and accountability and in line with that commitment it encourages employees and others with serious concerns about any aspect of the pre-school's work to come forward and voice those concerns. It recognises that certain cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis. This policy makes it clear that staff can do so without fear of reprisals and is intended to encourage and enable staff to raise serious concerns within the setting rather than overlooking or making the problem public.

If a staff member reasonably believes that any of the following offences have been committed:

- Criminal offence
- Failure to comply with any legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- Danger to the health and safety of an individual
- Damage to the environment
- An act of misconduct
- Dishonesty
- A breach of the pre-school's policies and procedures
- Attempt to conceal information on any of the above

Then he or she will be able to raise their concerns without fear of victimisation or dismissal. Concerns should be raised with the employee's line manager or the Chair of Trustees.

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Any accusations of malpractice will be taken seriously and investigated promptly.

Any attempt by an employee to intimidate or victimise a colleague who wishes to raise legitimate concerns about malpractice will be treated as a disciplinary offence. Likewise, knowingly making false or malicious allegation against another person will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

This policy encourages you to put your name to your allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful and may be more difficult to investigate.

Employees or parents should firstly raise their concerns with the Managing Supervisor, the Business Manager or the Chair of Trustees.

Employees or parents raising a concern must have regard for the setting's Confidentiality Policy and not discuss the matter with other staff, parents or anyone else outside the setting.

All concerns raised under this policy will be treated with care and sensitivity. All concerns will be treated confidentially and anonymity respected in the first instance. If anonymity has to be broken later in order to complete successfully an investigation, or the person who raises the concern needs to give evidence, then advice and support will be offered to the staff member/parent involved.

If the concern raised is a Safeguarding issue regarding a staff member, then it *must* be raised with the Safeguarding Designated Officer for the setting, **Mary Richards** or the Trustee with this responsibility, **Sera Byrne**. This concern will then immediately be raised with the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) and advice sought before any further steps are taken. If urgent action is required in response to a concern this may well be taken before a full investigation is conducted. (See also Safeguarding Policy)

Refers to
Confidentiality Policy (0005)
Safeguarding Policy (0022)

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Responsibility for periodic review	Personnel Sub-committee
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Document History

Rev	Changes	Date	Approval
00	New Policy	20/03/12	Committee
01	Addition of scope statement	02/01/14	Business Manager

*Not controlled document when printed
or downloaded!*

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