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**Managing Allegations and Concerns Policy**

**Allegations against staff and complaints**

These procedures are in line with ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (2018) and should be read alongside The Life Nursery’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

These procedures relate to any allegations regarding individuals working in or volunteering at The Life Nursery. This procedure is about managing allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position. It should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a member of staff (including volunteers) in The Life Nursery provides care and education for children who have:

1. behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
2. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
3. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children.

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events can and do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to children and we must act on every allegation.

Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

Allegations against staff should be reported to the Nursery Manager.

Allegations against the Nursery Manager should be reported to the OurBD4 Board of Directors. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018). Further information is contained in the Nursery’s disciplinary procedures.

* The Life Nursery ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the nursery, which may include an allegation of abuse.
* We ensure that all staff, volunteers and anyone else working in The Life Nursery knows how to raise concerns that they may have about the conduct of behaviour of other people including staff/colleagues.
* We differentiate between allegations and concerns about the quality of case or practice and complaints and have a separate process for responding to complaints.
* The Life Nursery respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteers or any other person working in the nursery which includes:
* Inappropriate sexual comments;
* Excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images
* We will recognise and respond to allegations that a member of the team has:
* Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
* Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to the children
* We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers who know how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with our response
* We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse of a staff member or volunteer within The Life Nursery, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
* We refer any such complaint immediately to the OUR BD4 Board of Directors and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as necessary to investigate:-

**The Designated Officer  (LADO) for *Working Together to Safeguard Children – The Bradford Partnership***can be contacted via the Duty Officer, on**01274 435600 or**[**LADO@bradford.gov.uk**](mailto:LADO@bradford.gov.uk)

* The Life Nursery will report any such alleged incident to Ofsted (unless advised by LADO that this is unnecessary due to the incident not meeting the threshold), as well as what measures The Life Nursery have taken. The Life Nursery are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
* The Life Nursery co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children’s social care in conjunction with the police.
* Where the management team and children’s social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families, throughout the process.
* Where it is appropriate and practical and agreed with LADO, we will seek to offer an alternative to suspension for the duration of the investigation, if an alternative is available that will safeguard children and not place the affected staff or volunteer at risk.

**Policy reviewed by Louise Gray, Nursery Manager and Fran Edwards, Deputy Manager – September 2020**

**This policy was read and agreed by:-**

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| **Name** | **Signed** | **Dated** |
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**Legislation:**

Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)

Keeping Children Safe In Education (September 2018)