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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’ (2023) (Part 4) and should be read alongside The Life Nursery’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. All staff have regard to the following two sections of KCSIE (2023) – “Section one for allegations that may meet the threshold and Section Two for allegations/concerns that do not meet the threshold i.e. low level concerns”.

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 (Allegations Management Process (Staff and Volunteers) Flow Chart – Safer Bradford). 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 Liam Grima, the Chair Person of OUR BD4 CIC, Board of Directors. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023). 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)

**Responding to an allegation against staff, volunteers & childminder household members:**

* Listen to and record the allegation.
* Refer to your allegation management policy & procedure.
* Contact the Duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) immediately for advice and guidance. Calls will still go via this number **01274 435600 -** ask to speak to the Duty LADO. Or you can send an email to [LADO@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@bradford.gov.uk) with your name, role, name of the setting and a contact number to ask for a call back from the Duty LADO. If you do ring and the Duty LADO is not available, you will be asked to send an email to the LADO mailbox giving details as above.
* The Duty LADO may instruct you to make a formal referral within one day, completing the *‘LADO referral form’*which can be found [here](https://www.saferbradford.co.uk/children/practitioners-who-work-or-volunteer-with-children-and-young-people/)(listed down the right-hand side of the page).
* Inform Ofsted, asap or within 14 days using the [serious childcare incident report online](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-a-serious-childcare-incident)

**Policy reviewed by Louise Gray, Nursery Manager and Fran Edwards, Deputy Manager – January 2024**

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

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

Working Together to Safeguard Children (Jan 2023)

Keeping Children Safe In Education (September 2023)

Safer Bradford (September 2023)