Whistleblowing Policy

STATEMENT OF INTENT

It is our intention that staff working at St Michael's Pre-School feel confident about coming forward and reporting any issues/concerns that they may have regarding the areas documented below, whilst remaining protected from any subsequent discrimination or retaliation.

AIMS Our aims are to:

• Ensure staff understand their responsibilities and feel confident in raising and reporting a serious concern at the earliest opportunity.

• Provide avenues for staff to raise concerns and receive feedback on any action taken.

• Ensure that staff receive a response to their concerns and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied.

• Reassure staff that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if they have made any disclosures in good faith.

• Promote a culture of openness and transparency where concerns can be raised without fear of discrimination or negative consequences.

• Ensure that whistleblowing procedures align with the latest EYFS (September 2025) safeguarding expectations.

Any concerns can be reported without this leading to any harassment or victimisation, and every effort will be made to keep both the concern and the member of staff's identity confidential.

WHAT SHOULD BE REPORTED?

• A criminal offence.

• The inappropriate treatment or care of a child.

• Any breach in the behaviour of a manager, staff member, student, or volunteer.

• Discrimination of any kind.

• Concerns that could impact the health and safety of children or adults.

Failure to follow safeguarding procedures, including unsafe recruitment practices.

• Failure to follow updated EYFS safeguarding policies, including new whistleblowing protections and safer recruitment measures.

It is not intended that this policy be a substitute for, or an alternative to, the 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.

RAISING A CONCERN

An employee or volunteer who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise such a concern should normally report the matter to the Pre-school Manager, who will advise the employee or volunteer of the action that will be taken in response to the concerns expressed. Concerns should be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible.

If an employee feels uncomfortable speaking to the Pre-School Manager they should speak to one of the Deputy Managers.

If an employee or volunteer feels the matter cannot be discussed with the Pre-school Manager or the Deputies, he or she should contact the Early Years Adviser for advice or contact the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) at: ladoreferral@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Staff should also be made aware that they can contact external safeguarding bodies, such as Ofsted or the NSPCC, if they feel their concern is not being taken seriously within the setting or if they fear retaliation. **Ofsted Whistleblowing hotline on 0300 123 3155 or whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk. NSPCC: 0800 028 0286 or help@nspcc.org.uk**

DISCLOSURE

This policy is underpinned by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which encourages people to raise concerns about misconduct or malpractice in the workplace, to promote good governance and accountability in the public interest.

Additionally, whistleblowing protections will be reinforced to ensure that staff have clear and safe avenues for reporting safeguarding concerns without fear of retaliation.

This Policy was adopted at a meeting of: St Michael's Pre-School

Reviewed and Updated in September 2026