**Policy Statement**

Whistleblowing can be defined as raising a concern about a malpractice within an organization. At Little Buds we are committed to delivering a high quality pre-school service, promoting organizational accountability and maintaining public confidence. We are committed to safeguarding children and adults and promoting the welfare of every child, and therefore, expect the highest possible standards of openness. To safeguard each individual child and users of our provision, reports of malpractice are taken seriously. It is the duty of every employee and volunteer to report situations of witnessed and/or suspected misconduct or malpractice. Little Buds recognizes that the decision to report a concern can be difficult one to make, not least because of fear of reprisals from those responsible.

This policy provides individuals at Little Buds protection from victimization or punishment where they raise a genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice in a setting or during an organized trip or outing. This also includes any action likely to bring Pre-school into disrepute the policy is in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which encourages people to raise concerns about misconduct or malpractice in the workplace, in order to promote good governance and accountability. Such behavior would include:

* A criminal offence
* Failure to comply with a legal obligation
* Danger to health and safety of an individual and/or environment
* Deliberate concealment of information in relation to any of the above

**Procedure**

* Any staff member, parent/carer, or volunteer who, acting in good faith, has a concern about misconduct or malpractice at Little Buds Playgroup, should in the first instance inform the playgroup leader of their concerns. If the issue concerns the playgroup leader then the Chair of the Committee should be informed. If it relates to the Chair then Social Services should be contacted for advice on the number below.
* The report, written or verbal, should set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible, and the reason why there are concerns
* In every instance it is advised to report concerns early.
* Most concerns will be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
* All concerns will be investigated by the playgroup/club leader or chairperson as quickly and efficiently as possible and resolved.
* The Playgroup leader will then advise the staff member, parent/carer or volunteer what action will be taken in relation to the issue raised without a breach of confidentiality.
* If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the staff, parent/carer or volunteer should put their concern in writing to the Chair of the Committee.
* Confidentiality will be maintained at all times and every effort will be made to ensure the person raising the concern will not suffer any personal detriment as a result of voicing their concerns and likewise the member of staff under investigation.
* Any malicious and unfounded reports will be considered for disciplinary action.
* If an employee, parent/carer or volunteer feels that the matter cannot be dealt with by either the playgroup leader or the Chairperson they should contact Social Services direct on for advice on what steps to take.
* If a situation is deemed to be likely to seriously affect a child/children, and contacting the playgroup leaser or Chair is inappropriate, then they should contact the Early Years Team, Social Services 02837520541. Public Concern can also be contacted at 020 7404 6609/020 3117 2520
* All documentation will be kept securely in staff records or committee files as appropriate.

**Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the management team to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

This policy was adopted by Little Buds Management Team

Signed:……………………………………………………………………………………

(on behalf of the setting)

Position: …………………………………………………………………………………..

Date: …………………………………………………………………………………..

Reviewed on:

Date:…………………. Signed:……………………………………………

Date:…………………. Signed:……………………………………………

Date:………………… Signed:……………………………………………