DERBYSHIRE County Council

B: Whistleblowing – Group and school-based providers

What do I need to know?

- Legal Framework
  - The Children Act 1989
  - Children Act 2004
  - Protection of Children Act 1978
  - Data Protection Act 1998
  - Children Act 2004 - Explanatory Notes
  - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
  - Sexual Offences Act 2003
  - Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 (legislation.gov.uk)
  - Equality Act 2010 (legislation.gov.uk)
  - EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers page 24, paragraph 3.7 – 3.8

- **See model Child Protection Policies on SchoolsNet and links below for contact details and training opportunities.**

Whistleblowing (pages 9-10 of audit)	**Things to consider and discuss:**
Do you **ensure** that there are appropriate whistleblowing procedures in place for all staff (including students and volunteers) to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in the setting's provision?	• Is there a documented whistleblowing policy? Is this accessible to all staff? • How are all staff informed about the whistleblowing procedures? • How are all staff informed during induction? • How are students and volunteers supported to understand this policy? • Do you inform all staff of any updates to this policy in training sessions? • Are there clear and anonymous channels for all staff (including students and volunteers) to report concerns about unsafe practices and, or safeguarding issues?

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Whistleblowing (pages 9-10 of audit)	Things to consider and discuss:
	• Who is responsible for receiving and investigating whistleblowing reports, and is this person independent from those directly involved in the issue?
Do you **ensure** that whistleblowing procedures include when and how to report concerns and the process that will be followed after staff report concern?	• What steps are taken to protect whistleblowers from retaliation or negative consequences for reporting concerns? • How often are the whistleblowing procedures reviewed to ensure they remain effective and in line with best practices? • Do you track and review the outcomes of whistleblowing cases to ensure issues raised are appropriately addressed and that patterns are identified?
Do you **ensure** all staff are aware of the setting's whistleblowing procedures?	• Can all staff (including students and volunteers) report concerns to external bodies if they feel the issue is not being addressed internally? Are those contacts provided? • Is there a clear description of situations or types of concerns that should be reported through whistleblowing? • Does the policy specify the timing for reporting concerns? • Are there multiple channels (e.g., online forms, email, hotline) for reporting concerns, and is it clear how to use each? • Is there guidance on how record and provide evidence when raising a concern? • Does the procedure outline the steps that will be taken after a report is received, including who will review the report and timelines for a response? • Are whistleblowers informed of the potential outcomes or actions that may result from their report? • How are all staff who you work with initially informed about the whistleblowing procedures when they join the setting?

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Whistleblowing (pages 9-10 of audit)	Things to consider and discuss:
	• Are there regular training sessions or briefings about whistleblowing procedures? If so, how often do they occur? • What steps are taken to ensure all staff who you work with members understand their right and responsibility to report concerns? • Can you provide examples of materials or resources (like posters, emails, or handbooks) that inform all staff who you work with about whistleblowing procedures? • Do you have a system in place to update all staff who you work with if any changes are made to the whistleblowing policy?
Do you **ensure** all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team?	• How do you communicate to all staff (including students and volunteers) that they are encouraged to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices? • What specific actions do you take to create a safe and open environment for reporting concerns? • How do you handle situations where staff (including students and volunteers) feel uncomfortable reporting concerns directly to yourself? • How is follow-up handled with the person who raises concerns, so they know their issues were taken seriously? • How do you monitor and assess the effectiveness of your procedures for raising and addressing concerns?
Do you **make sure** where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they should use the other channels open to them?	• How do you make all staff (including students and volunteers) aware of the other channels open to them? • How do you foster a culture of whistleblowing? • How do you encourage all staff (including students and volunteers) to raise issues with other channels if they feel their concerns are not being addressed?

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Whistleblowing (pages 9-10 of audit)	Things to consider and discuss:
Do you **make sure** that staff know about: • NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available. • Ofsted provides guidance on how to make complaints about a childcare provider: Complaints procedure - Ofsted - GOV.UK • General guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: Whistleblowing for employees: What is a whistleblower - GOV.UK	• How do you provide the information about the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line. • How do you inform all staff (including students and volunteers) of the details for the contact numbers, email address or written address? • Is this information displayed as a poster? Is this information given at induction? How often is this information re-shared? • Do all staff who you work with know they can call 0800 0280285 – 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. • Do they know that the email address is: help@nspcc.org.uk, or that they can alternatively write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH. • Do you make any childminders and, or assistants who you work with aware of documents such as: Complaints procedure - Ofsted - GOV.UK or Whistleblowing for employees: What is a whistleblower - GOV.UK

Useful links and further help:

Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings

Early years inspection handbook

Report a serious childcare incident

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners

Complaints procedure - Ofsted - GOV.UK

Whistleblowing for employees: What is a whistleblower - GOV.UK

Disqualification Under the Childcare Act

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners

Data protection
ICO - Information Commissioners Office
NSPCC - National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Child or adult at risk of immediate harm and in need of protection: Derbyshire Police – 999/ Starting Point – 01629 533190
Worried about a child: Derbyshire Police -101 / Starting Point Consultation & Advice Service for Professionals - 01629 535353 / / Starting Point Referral Form/ Local Safeguarding Designated Officer - 01629 533190 / Derby and Derbyshire LADO referral form / professional.allegations@derbyshire.gov.uk
Education Data Hub/Data Protection: Email educationdatahub@derbyshire.gov.uk
DBS The East Midlands Regional Outreach Officer: Email DBSRegionaloutreach@dbs.gov.uk/ alexandra.honey1@dbs.gov.uk/ Tel: 01325 953562 / 07867 153500
Derby City Professional Consultation Line – new phone number: The professional consultation line number will change from 1st December 2026. The new number will be 01332 640055. There is no change to the opening hours which will continue to be 10 am – 4pm.

TRAINING
DSL training: Derbyshire Early Years Service - Eventbrite or Email: CS.EYS@derbyshire.gov.uk
Other training: Training (ddscp.org.uk)

MODEL POLICIES for the PVI sector
Safeguarding – Derbyshire SchoolsNet
Derbyshire SchoolsNet – Early Years team