



Whistle-blowing

At Sallywags Nursery, we are committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity, and accountability. We aim to foster an environment where staff feel safe and supported in raising concerns about practices or behaviour that may compromise the safety or well-being of children, colleagues, or the organisation.

This policy outlines the steps staff should take to raise concerns, how they will be investigated, and the support available throughout the process. It is designed to ensure that any form of malpractice or wrongdoing can be addressed quickly and effectively.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all staff members, including:

- Full-time and part-time staff
- Volunteers and students
- Agency workers
- Contractors and consultants

It covers concerns about poor or unsafe practice in the settings safeguarding provision, wrongdoing in the workplace, including but not limited to:

- Unsafe childcare practices
- Breach of safeguarding procedures
- Health and safety risks
- Financial misconduct or fraud
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination
- Breaches of policies and procedures
- Attempts to cover up wrongdoing

What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the act of reporting concerns about wrongdoing or risks that affect others, particularly those that endanger children or violate legal and ethical standards.

Whistleblowing is NOT:

- Making a complaint about your own employment situation (this would be dealt with under the Grievance Policy).

Responsibilities of Staff

All staff have a duty to report concerns to ensure the safety and welfare of children and the integrity of the nursery. You are not expected to prove wrongdoing – you simply need to raise your concern honestly and reasonably.

When to Raise a Concern

Raise a concern:

- Immediately upon witnessing poor or unsafe practices
- If you suspect harm or neglect, even without conclusive evidence
- If you believe policies are not being followed
- If you have previously raised a concern and believe it has not been addressed

How to Raise a Concern (Internal Process)

Step 1: Initial Report

Raise the concern with your Room Leader / Manager / DSL. This can be done:

- Verbally, in a private meeting
- In writing (email or written note)

Clearly state:

- What happened (dates, times, people involved)
- Why it concerns you
- Whether it is an ongoing issue

Step 2: Escalation

If you feel unable to speak to your manager, or if no action is taken:

- Raise your concern with the Nursery Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Step 3: Final Internal Escalation

If you still feel the matter has not been addressed properly:

- Report it to the Nursery Owner or Board of Directors, if applicable.

(Whistle blowing flow chart to support for further advice and contact details)

What Happens After a Concern is Raised

Initial Response:

- Your concern will be acknowledged within 5 working days.
- You may be asked for further information or clarification.
- The manager or DSL will assess whether a formal investigation is needed.

Investigation:

- An impartial person will investigate the concern.
- The investigation may involve reviewing documentation, speaking to witnesses, and checking compliance with policies.
- You may be asked to attend a confidential interview.

Outcome:

- You will receive feedback within 28 days, where possible.
- The nursery will take corrective actions if the concern is upheld.
- Where appropriate, disciplinary action may be taken.
- Where no wrongdoing is found, you will be given a clear explanation.

Confidentiality and Protection

- All concerns will be treated sensitively and confidentially.
- Your identity will not be revealed without your consent unless required by law.
- You will not be victimised or penalised for raising a concern in good faith.

Note: Making a false allegation deliberately and maliciously may result in disciplinary action.

If You Cannot Raise the Concern Internally

If you feel unable to report the concern internally or believe it has not been properly dealt with, you can contact an external body:

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line

- **Phone:** 0800 028 0285 (8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am-6pm any weekends)
- **Email:** help@nspcc.org.uk
- **Website:** <https://www.nspcc.org.uk>
- **Postal address:** NSPCC, Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH
[Charity Commission+8Cross Stitch Centre+8racetothemoon.nspcc.org.uk+8](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)

This address is used for general enquiries, supporter communications, and donations

This is a confidential service for professionals to report concerns about child safety.

Ofsted

- **Phone:** 0300 123 3155

Head Office: Scallywags Nursery Melbourne, Castle Lane, Melbourne, Derby, DE73 8JB
Email: melbourne@scallywagsnursery.com | Tel: 01332 862188

- **Email:** enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
- **Website:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

You can report concerns if you believe children are at risk or regulatory standards are being breached.

Legal Protection for Whistle-blowers

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, you are legally protected if:

- Your disclosure is made in good faith
- It relates to a relevant wrongdoing
- You reasonably believe it is true

You cannot be dismissed or penalised for whistleblowing.