**Whistleblowing Policy**

**Rationale:**

It is important for employees at Spire Pre-school to realise that should they ever have any concerns whatsoever, they are free to report these and that they will supported in doing so.

This policy document makes it clear that you should do this without fear of victimisation, discrimination or disadvantage. The policy is designed to encourage employees to raise serious concerns within the pre-school rather than overlooking a problem.

The policy applies to all employees including volunteers and work experience students.

**Safeguards**

It is recognised that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. However, it is also vital that an employee understands that in reporting concerns, they are merely doing their duty to their employer and for those to whom they are providing a service, ensuring that Spire pre-school offers the highest standards for the children in its care.

Spire pre-school will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressure) and will take appropriate action to protect employees when they raise a concern in good faith.

**Confidentiality**

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time, however you may need to come forward as a witness.

**How to raise a concern**

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns at the earliest opportunity with the preschool manager. This depends, however on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of the malpractice. For example if you believe the management is involved, you should approach the chair of the Committee. Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing to include:

 The background and history of the concern.

 The reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation.

You may request a friend or colleague to be present during any meetings in connection with the concerns raised.

**The pre-school response**

Concerns or allegations which fall within the scope of specific procedures (for example child protection) will normally be referred for consideration under those procedures.

Some concerns will be resolved with agreed action without further need for investigation.

If urgent action is required, this will be taken before any investigation is carried out.

Within 10 working days of a concern being raised, the employee will receive a written response from the manager or to whom the complaint has been made, detailing the outcome of any investigation and any action taken. This letter will also supply details of support mechanisms or further sources of support, should this be appropriate.