

Escalation Policy

Statement of Intent

Occasionally situations arise when workers within the setting may feel that the decision made by a worker from another agency on a child protection or child in need case is not a safe decision. As the safety of individual children is of paramount consideration it is the intention of Tisbury Pre-school that all workers should feel able to challenge decision-making and to see this as their right and responsibility in order to promote the best multi-agency safeguarding practice.

Aims

To provide workers with the means to raise concerns about decisions made by other professionals or agencies by:-

- Avoiding professional disputes that put children at risk or obscure the focus on the child
- Resolving the difficulties within and between agencies quickly and openly
- Identifying problem areas in working together where there is a lack of clarity and to promote the resolution via amendment to protocols and procedures

Working together depends on an open approach and honest relationships between agencies and problem resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation and joint working to safeguard children.

Resolution should be sought within the shortest timescale possible to ensure the child is protected. Disagreements should be resolved at the lowest possible stage however if a child is thought to be at risk of immediate harm staff should refer directly to the WSCB nominated person (see below). In all other cases efforts should be made by all involved to resolve the dispute in a timely way. The primary focus must always be on ensuring that the safety and welfare of the child concerned is assured whilst discussions take place. As a guide the timescales for escalation through the stages below should be no longer than 5 working days.

Method

Stage 1. Any worker who feels that a decision is not safe or is inappropriate should initially consult the play-leader or her deputy to clarify their thinking in order to identify the problem. Be specific as to what the disagreement is about and what the objective is. Evidence of the nature and source of concerns should be available along with a record of all discussions.

Stage 2. Initial attempts should be taken to resolve the problem at the lowest possible level. This would normally be between the people who disagree. It should be recognized that differences in status and/or experience may affect the confidence of some workers to pursue this unsupported.

Stage 3. If the problem is not resolved at stage two, the concerned worker should contact the play-leader in order that concerns can be raised with an equivalent supervisor/manager in the

other agency. The manager should also notify the Safeguarding Children’s Board Manager who will keep a record of all on-going disagreements.

Stage 4. If the matter is not resolved at stage 3 the managers should report to their designated safeguarding representative and these managers should attempt to resolve the issue through discussion

Stage 5. If it has not been possible to resolve the professional differences within the agencies concerned the matter should be referred to the nominated Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board representative, for Children’s Services this is Carolyn Godfrey (01225 713750)(carolyn.godfrey@wiltshire.gov.uk). The nominated representative will liaise with the Independent Chair of the Board as a matter of urgency and, in discussion with the nominated WSCB representative a final decision will be reached and communicated to all parties within 3 working days.

At all stages of the process, actions and decisions must be recorded in writing and shared with relevant personnel, to include the worker who raised the initial concern. In particular, this must include written confirmation between the parties about an agreed outcome of the disagreement and how any outstanding issues will be pursued.

At the level the matter has been resolved between parties, the WSCB ‘Notification of an Escalation’ form (see appendix 1) must be completed by the manager who resolved the concern and forwarded to the WSCB Business Support email address below. This notification form will enable WSCB to collate evidence of escalations and that they are being resolved at the right level and to gather information about the kind of issues that are being resolved.

LSCBGCSX@wiltshire.gcsx.gov.uk

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the Tisbury Pre-school Committee on

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Signed..... Position

Date.....