



## **Allegations against Staff Policy and Procedure**

**Objective:** To ensure that every complaint against staff is documented, thoroughly and fairly investigated and resolved to the best interest of children and staff at the nursery.

**Policy:** The nursery aims to provide a warm and friendly environment for the staff and children and any allegations against staff are dealt through the proper channel in a well documented and fair manner. The policy at Learning Ladder Nursery is to ensure that a fair investigation is conducted to safeguard the best interest of the children and staff.

### **What is an allegation?**

An allegation is defined as any complaint or concern that might indicate that a person who works with children who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

Children, parents, other staff, volunteers, students, Local Authority representatives or members of the public may make allegations against staff. Incidents of poor practice or incompetence may be dealt with under normal disciplinary procedures without referring the matter to the authorities within a reasonable period of time.

### **Procedure:**

When faced with an allegation against any staff member, the following procedure must be followed:

- Alert the senior most staff present at the site i.e. Nursery Manager/Nursery Nurse
- Ensure the immediate safety of the child and other children who may be affected
- Seek necessary medical treatment without delay
- Clarify exactly who is alleging what, and whether there were any witnesses; the allegation may range from an act of carelessness to deliberate assault. Record the person's account accurately
- Record in writing the time, place and details of the incident and any action taken
- Sign and date the record
- Bring it to the attention of the HR manager and Child Protection Officer
- Confidentiality must be respected throughout the process
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The investigation process involves questioning of the staff involved, review of incident on recordings by nursery wide cameras, questioning of other staff who may have knowledge about the incident, a review of concerned employees past records and also a meeting with the complainant to ensure clear understanding of the concern/complaint.

In case of serious allegations, the HR manager and the child protection officer may raise the matter to the Nursery Director as well.

Once the matter has been clearly understood, the HR manager then decides on a course of action which may include one or multiple of the following:

- An apology from the concerned staff for minor incidents
- A warning to the concerned staff
- Suspension from job while investigations continue
- Withholding of any raises/bonuses/other incentives
- Immediate dismissal of concerned staff and report to concerned authorities - police/ children's social services
- Review and revision of the concerned Nursery policy and procedure to avoid recurrence of such incidents in the future
- Update of staff training manuals
- Communication of the matter and its resolution to complainant and all nursery staff

Please also refer to other policies related to Safeguarding Children - Child Protection Policy, Whistle Blowing, Maintaining children's safety and security on the premises, Children's behavior management, Illness and Injury related policies.

**All staff need to be aware that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.**