



Zac's Club Limited

Whistle Blowing Policy

Definition:

Whistle blowing is raising a concern about malpractice within an organisation.

Zac's Club is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability. In line with that commitment, we encourage employees and others that we deal with, who have a serious concern about any aspect of the settings work, to come forward and voice those concerns. It is recognised that certain cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis.

Purpose:

Employees are often the first to see or suspect something that may be seriously wrong within the setting; however, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues. They may also fear harassment or victimisation.

This policy is intended to

- * Encourage employees to feel confident in raising serious concerns, to question and act upon their concerns about practice
- * To provide staff with a method of raising concerns
- * To ensure employees receive a response to their concerns and they are aware how to pursue them if they are not satisfied
- * Reassure employees that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if they have reasonable belief that they have made any disclosure in good faith.

In addition to the whistle blowing policy, Zac's Club has full details of procedure covering discipline, grievance and complaints in their Staff Handbook. This policy is intended to compliment this and to cover concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures.

Confidentiality

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal employee's identities; however, this cannot be guaranteed if the matter is

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considered by an external body, outside the setting's control e.g. legal proceedings.

How to raise a concern:

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. When raising a concern verbally, the employee should write down any relevant information and date it. In both circumstances the employee should give the background and history of the concern and the reason why they are particularly concerned about the situation.

As a first step the employee should raise the concern with their line manager, however if their concern is about the line manager, they should take it to another member of the management team.

Anonymous allegations:

This policy encourages employees to put their name to any allegations whenever possible.

Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful but will be considered at the discretion of the manager and or director. When exercising their discretion, the factors to be considered would be

- The seriousness of the issues raised
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from the attributable sources.

How Zac's Club will respond:

When an employee feels concerned about bad practice, he or she will need to identify the issues carefully

Where appropriate, the matters raised may:

- Be investigated by the Manager or Director, or by a Manager from another Zac's Club setting, where impartiality may need to be considered.
- Be referred to the police
- Be referred to an external auditor or safeguarding body

In order to protect individuals and those accused of misdeeds or possible malpractice, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and if so, what form it should take. The overriding principal Zac's Club will have in mind is the public interest, and safety of individuals. Concerns or allegations, which fall within the scope of specific procedures (for example child protection or discrimination issues) will normally be referred for consideration under those procedures

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Within seven working days of a concern being raised, the Manager hearing the concern will write to the employee, and:

- Acknowledge the concern has been received
- Indicate how the matter will be dealt with and who will be involved.
- Where possible, give an estimate of how long it will take to provide a response.
- Tell the employee whether any initial enquiries have been made.
- Check whether he or she needs any personal support.
- Tell the employee whether further investigations will take place and if not why.

Untrue allegations:

If employees make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against them. If however, they make an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against them. Details of the disciplinary procedure is identified in the staff handbook.

How matters can be taken further:

This policy is intended to provide employees with a way to raise concerns within Zac's Club Limited. If they are not satisfied and they feel it is right to take matters outside of the nursery, the employee may also raise the matter with our Early Years Advisor or OFSTED for advice on what steps to follow. If referred to Ofsted use their designated telephone number 0300 1233155 or inform them through email on whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk, or write to Ofsted to this address: WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD Alternatively, for other advice you can contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on: 0800 028 0285

If employees take their concerns outside Zac's Club, this policy does not apply. They should seek advice about their rights and responsibilities from, for example, the Citizen's Advice Bureau (www.adviceguide.org.uk) or similar advice service.

Other policies relating to this policy:

- Confidentiality Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Positive behaviour policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Staff Handbook

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