



Whistleblowing Policy

1. Introduction

Venture Outdoor Kindergarten is committed to maintaining a culture of openness, accountability, and integrity. Staff, volunteers, and stakeholders must feel confident in raising concerns about wrongdoing or misconduct without fear of retaliation. This policy sets out how concerns can be raised and how they will be handled.

2. Purpose

This policy provides guidance on how to report concerns regarding:

- The welfare and safety of children in our care.
- Any breach of safeguarding procedures or policies.
- Illegal, unethical, or improper conduct by staff, volunteers, or others working with the setting.
- Any failure to comply with legal obligations.
- Any actions that may pose a risk to public safety or the environment.

This policy should be read alongside our **Safeguarding Policy** and other relevant policies.

3. Legal Framework

This policy is in accordance with:

- **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)**
- **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework**
- **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) procedures**

4. What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is when a worker reports wrongdoing within an organisation that is in the public interest. It is different from a grievance, which concerns an individual's employment rights.

Concerns may include:

- A child being at risk of harm due to abuse, neglect, or poor practice.
- A member of staff failing to follow safeguarding policies.

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- Inappropriate or unprofessional behaviour by staff towards children, parents, or colleagues.
- Financial misconduct, fraud, or mismanagement of funds.
- Health and safety risks, including unsafe working conditions.
- Any attempt to cover up wrongdoing.

5. How to Raise a Concern

If you have a concern, you should raise it **as soon as possible** to ensure it is addressed appropriately.

Step 1: Internal Reporting

Report your concern to the **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)** at your setting:

Setting	Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)	Contact Details
Kitley Farm	Laura Gogola	07949 359494 / venturekitleyfarm@gmail.com
Hope Cove	Rachel Mahood	07494 108204 / venturehopecove@gmail.com
Dartington	Megan Valentine	07503 301543 / venturedartington@gmail.com
Directors	Jennifer Papenfus & Zoe Purkis	07500 927722 / ventureoutdoorkindergarten@outlook.com

Step 2: Escalation if Necessary

If you feel unable to raise the concern internally, or if your concern is not dealt with appropriately, you may contact:

- **The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):** 01392 384964
ladosecuremailbox@devon.gov.uk
- **Ofsted:** Call 0300 123 1231 or email whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk
- **NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline:** Call **0800 028 0285** (Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM)
or email help@nspcc.org.uk

6. Confidentiality & Protection

- All concerns will be treated **confidentially**, and every effort will be made to protect the whistleblower's identity.
- If a concern leads to disciplinary action, the whistleblower may be asked to provide further information but will be supported throughout the process.
- No staff member will suffer **detriment, bullying, harassment, or victimisation** for raising a genuine concern. Any retaliation against whistleblowers will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

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7. Malicious or False Allegations

Venture Outdoor Kindergarten takes whistleblowing seriously. However, **malicious, unfounded, or knowingly false allegations** may result in disciplinary action.

8. Review & Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed **annually** to ensure it remains up to date with legislation and best practices.

Policy Reviewed: 07/02/25

Next Review Date: 07/02/26

Jennifer Papenfus