Allegations Against Staff Policy

Policy Statement

Bradpole Preschool is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. We recognise our duty to respond promptly and appropriately to any allegation or concern made against a member of staff, volunteer, student or visitor working with children.

This policy ensures that children are protected, allegations are handled fairly and consistently, staff are supported appropriately and statutory safeguarding procedures are followed.

This policy should be read alongside our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing Policy and Disciplinary Policy.

Legal Framework

This policy is informed by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework, Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition), Working Together to Safeguard Children, Local Safeguarding Partnership Procedures, UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to allegations made against any employee, volunteer, student, committee member, contractor or visitor working within the preschool.

An allegation refers to any concern that a person working in the setting has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child; possibly committed a criminal offence against a child; behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk; or behaved inappropriately towards children.

Reporting an Allegation

Any allegation or concern must be reported immediately to the preschool leads, Sally or Nikki, or the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), Nikki or Sally.

If the allegation concerns either Preschool Lead, it must be reported directly to the Chair of the Management Committee.

If a child is in immediate danger, emergency services must be contacted.

Staff must not investigate the allegation themselves, discuss the matter with others or confront the person concerned.

Initial Response

On receiving an allegation, the preschool leads, DSL or Chair will take the allegation seriously and ensure that the child's safety is prioritised. Details of the concern will be recorded accurately, including the date and time, names of those involved, a description of the concern and any actions taken.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process, and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted within one working day for advice and guidance.

Contact with LADO

All allegations meeting the LADO threshold must be referred within one working day.

The LADO will advise on whether the allegation requires a formal investigation, whether police or Children's Social Care involvement is necessary, and whether employer-led disciplinary action should be considered.

No internal investigation will begin without LADO guidance.

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Managing the Investigation

Following advice from the LADO, the preschool may undertake an internal investigation, cooperate with external investigations, initiate disciplinary procedures or take no further action where appropriate.
All investigations will be conducted fairly, promptly, confidentially and thoroughly.

Suspension and Alternative Arrangements

Where necessary, a member of staff may be suspended on full pay or temporarily redeployed while an allegation is being investigated.
Suspension is a neutral act and does not imply guilt or constitute disciplinary action. Any suspension will be reviewed regularly, and the least disruptive option will always be considered first.

Supporting the Child

Bradpole Preschool will ensure that the child feels safe and listened to throughout the process and will provide appropriate emotional support. We will work sensitively with parents and carers and follow safeguarding procedures at all times.

Supporting the Member of Staff

Bradpole Preschool recognises the impact that an allegation can have on the member of staff concerned. We will treat individuals fairly and respectfully, provide access to support, maintain confidentiality and keep them informed of progress. A named contact person will be allocated to provide support and act as their point of contact.
The member of staff against whom the allegation has been made is entitled to request that another member of staff or a union representative attends any meetings with them to provide support.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information relating to allegations will only be shared with those who need to know.
Staff must not discuss allegations informally, share information on social media or speak to parents or the media about the matter. Any breach of confidentiality may result in disciplinary action.

Outcomes of Investigations

Following an investigation, the outcome will be recorded using one of the following classifications:
Substantiated: There is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.
Unsubstantiated: There is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation.
Unfounded: There is no evidence or proper basis to support the allegation.
False: There is sufficient evidence to show that the allegation is false.
Malicious: The allegation has been made deliberately and with the intention of causing harm.

Appropriate action will be taken in each case, depending on the findings and any advice received from the relevant safeguarding authorities.

Record Keeping

Bradpole Preschool will maintain secure records of all allegations, investigations, outcomes and actions taken. Records will be kept on personnel files, retained in line with safeguarding guidance and stored securely in accordance with data protection requirements.

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Referrals and Regulatory Notifications

Where required, Bradpole Preschool will make referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), notify Ofsted, inform relevant professional bodies and cooperate fully with statutory agencies.

False or Malicious Allegations

If an allegation is found to have been deliberately false or malicious, appropriate action will be taken. Support will be offered to the member of staff concerned, and safeguarding procedures will still be reviewed to identify whether any improvements are necessary.

Learning and Improvement

Following any allegation, Bradpole Preschool will review its safeguarding procedures, identify any lessons learned, implement necessary improvements and update staff training where appropriate. This ensures that we continue to maintain a safe environment for all children, families and staff.

This policy was adopted by the Bradpole Preschool Committee

During the Summer Term 2026

Date to be reviewed Summer Term 2027