

ADMISSIONS

The Oaks Nursery accepts children from 2 years 6 months up to school age. It is our intention to ensure that the nursery is accessible to families from all sections of the local community through open, fair and clearly communicated procedures. In order to achieve this we will:

- Produce a prospectus that is clear and easily understood by all those expressing an interest in our nursery.
- Describe the nursery in a manner that is welcoming to a variety of family situations, so as to include parents/carers from all social and cultural groups, with or without Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
- Ensure that no accidental discrimination takes place.
- Arrange the waiting list by date of receipt of application.
- Be flexible about attendance patterns, but consider age, where priority for the mornings will be given to children who will be starting school in the following academic year, unless family circumstances dictate otherwise.
- Ensure all children are allocated a minimum of 2 sessions per week. These sessions will be taken over 2 separate days so as to support the child in settling into nursery and building relationships with their peers and adults.
- Set a timescale on the start date, so that those who delay joining by more than two months may not be guaranteed their original sessions, in order to accommodate those who are ready to join but may be further down the waiting list.
- Admissions are made at the start of each term in 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.
- Ensure that parents/carers are made aware of the need for observations and assessments and allocate a key worker to each child.
- Keep a place vacant whenever possible for emergency admissions.
- Make our policies known and accessible at all times.
- Clearly state that the nursery cannot be responsible for school age children, other than those of staff.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY

We believe that children and adults are happiest in an ordered environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and children are free to develop their play and learning without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-esteem and self-discipline in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

In order to achieve this:

- We have a named person who has overall responsibility for issues concerning behaviour.

Becky Tyler

- We require the named person to:
 - Keep her/himself up to date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support;
 - Access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour within the setting for supporting personal, social and emotional development; and to
 - Check that all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour. We keep a record of staff attendance at all training.
 - Familiarise new staff and volunteers with the setting's behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.
- Adults, (where the word 'adults' refers to staff, committee and voluntary helpers), will ensure that the rules are applied consistently so that children know what to expect and can build up acceptable codes of behaviour.
- Adults be a positive role model for the children with regard to friendliness, care and courtesy.
- Adults will praise and endorse desirable behaviour. Positive steps will be taken to avoid a situation in which children receive attention only in return for undesirable behaviour.
- We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key person. We work with parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.

When a child/children behave in unacceptable ways:

- Physical punishment will neither be used nor threatened.
- We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. Such solutions might include, for example

acknowledgement of feelings, explanations as to what was not acceptable, and supporting children to gain control over their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response.

- We ensure that there are enough popular toys and resources and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns.
- A child will never be sent out of the room by themselves.
- We support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
- Where there is racial or verbal abuse, the unacceptability of the behaviour will be explained immediately with no personal blame.
- It will always be made clear to them that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unwelcome.
- Adults will not behave in a threatening manner nor raise their voices unnecessarily.
- We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- Adults will be aware that some kinds of behaviour may arise from a child's special needs.
- We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We use physical restraints, such as holding, only to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property.

Bullying:

We take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. It is characterised by intent to hurt, often planned, and accompanied by an awareness of the impact of the bullying behaviour.

If a child bullies another child or children:

- We show the children who have been bullied that we are able to listen to their concerns and act upon them;
- We intervene to stop the child who is bullying from harming the other child or children;
- We explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is not acceptable;
- We give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied
- We help the child who has done the bullying to recognise the impact of their actions;

- We make sure that children who bully receive positive feedback for considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practise and reflect on considerate behaviour.
- We do not label children who bully as 'bullies'
- We recognise that children who bully may be experiencing bullying themselves, or be subject to abuse or other circumstances causing them to express their anger in negative ways towards others.
- We discuss what has happened with the parents of the child who did the bullying and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour; and

We share what has happened with the parents of the child who has been bullied, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaviour.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for professional and effective partnership between staff, management and parents/carers. It applies to anybody working with the children both on and off-site and is underpinned by the following principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All staff are responsible to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at The Oaks Nursery.
- Staff who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way
- The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and /or sexual identity
- All staff must recognise and respect the value and intrinsic worth of each child and family, regardless of economic or social background.
- All children and families deserve respect and understanding
- Early years practitioners are responsible for nurturing and educating young children as well as providing information and support to parents.
- Early years practitioners should seek to improve their understanding of the development of young children through ongoing education and collaboration with colleagues
- Early years practitioners have a responsibility to understand and adhere to current legislation and guidance that supports their role.
- All staff have a responsibility to contribute to the Oaks Nursery's responsibility to protect children and encourage a 'safer working culture'.
- Staff will be expected to follow agreed procedures, without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the Nursery Manager any deficiency in the standards.
- If staff have concerns regarding the Nursery Manager or other senior staff members the Whistleblowing Policy may be followed.
- When information is necessarily confidential it should only be made available on a 'need to know' basis

- Staff should ensure they are decently, safely and appropriately dressed for the tasks they undertake. Suitable footwear must be worn at all times.
- Long hair should be tied back, no jewellery should be worn except watches, important rings and studded earrings
- Except for medical reasons, employees must not take any substances that might affect their work.
- No staff should consume or be under the influence of drinks/drugs during their hours of work
- No smoking is permitted on the Oaks Nursery premises.
- Staff mobile phones should not be carried on the person within the Oaks Nursery; they should be left in the tin in the kitchen cupboard and turned on silent.
- The Oaks Nursery main telephone number should be used as the main point of contact for staff in an emergency.
- It is the responsibility of the setting manager/deputy or a nominated member of staff to delete all photographs stored on a digital camera after transfer to the computer for printing purposes.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES POLICY

At The Oaks Nursery we aim to provide the highest quality of education and care for all our children. We seek to offer a welcome to every child and their family and to provide a warm and caring environment within which all children can learn and develop as they play. We believe that children and their families are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work with our families and the community in general and we welcome any suggestions that they may have.

All settings are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond. This is made available to parents as well as Ofsted inspectors.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the settings provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with the setting leader.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the setting leader or chair of the management committee.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the setting leader meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative outcome is logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the setting leader or the chair of the management committee. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the leader should have the support of the chairperson of the management committee, present.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All of the parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy of it. The record is logged in the complaint Summary record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three meeting the parent and setting cannot reach agreement, an external mediator is invited to help to settle the complaint. This person should be acceptable to both parties, listens to both sides and offer advice.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. She/he can hold separate meetings with the settings personnel (setting leader and chair of the management committee) and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice he/she gives.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded his/her investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the setting leader and the chair of the management committee is held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion.
- A record of the meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, is made. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

The role of Ofsted and the Local Safeguarding Children Board

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the setting's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with the duty to ensure the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
- The number to call Ofsted with regards to a complaint is: **0300 123 1231**
- These details are displayed on our settings notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board in our local authority.
- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the setting leader works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. To ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Records

- A record of complaints against our setting and /or the children and /or the adults working in our setting is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Summary Complaints Records which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY POLICY

Children at The Oaks Nursery have their photographs taken to provide evidence of their achievements for developmental records.

- Under the Data Protection Act 1998, the nursery must seek parental consent to take photographs and use video recorders and a consent form must be signed. Parents also sign to say whether or not their child's photographs may be used for promotion / advertising outside of the nursery or on our website.
- A record of all consent details will be kept securely on file.
- If parents/carers prefer not to give permission we will respect their wishes.
- Photographs will be stored on the nursery laptop which is password protected and a dedicated memory stick.
- Photographs are transferred onto the nursery laptop or computer weekly or more frequently if required and the memory card cleared.
- Photographs to be developed are uploaded to a password protected area of the Snapfish site and are posted directly to the manager at the nursery address.
- The nursery's digital camera/s or memory cards must not leave the school setting except when being used on trips/outings.
- Photographs may be taken during indoor and outdoor play and displayed in albums, on our closed Facebook page or a child's development records for children and parent/carers to look through.
- Often photographs may contain other children in the background in events such as Sports Day, Outings, Christmas and fundraising. Events may be recorded by video and photographs by staff and parent/carers may be taken, but always in full view of all attending.
- No photographs or video clips of any children attending The Oaks Nursery should ever be used on social networking sites or displayed anywhere on the internet (with the exception of the nursery website or closed Facebook page and only if permission has been granted).

E SAFETY POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with The Oaks Nursery Mobile Phone and Social Networking Policy, Digital Photography Policy and Child Protection Statement and Policy. E-Safety concerns safeguarding children, young people and staff in the digital world. At The Oaks Nursery we recognise that the internet is part of everyday life for education, business and social interaction and with the increasing use of the internet and social networking sites, this policy is intended to protect children, their families, the setting and it's staff. It is our intention that all families are respected and confidentiality is of prime importance.

Using the Internet to Enhance Learning and Teaching

The purpose of internet access in the pre-school is to raise educational standards, promote pupil achievement, support the professional work of staff and to enhance the pre-school management of information and business administration systems.

- The nursery internet access will include filtering appropriate to the age of pupils and internet access will be planned to enrich and extend learning activities.
- Staff will select sites for children to use which will be age appropriate and these sites will be listed in the favourites menu.
- No unsupervised internet access will be available
- A member of staff will attend e safety training and will cascade the information to the team.

How e-mail and Internet Use will be Managed

The nursery encourages staff to use e mail and the internet at work where this can save time and expense. However it requires all staff to ensure that communication is well structured and professional.

If any member of staff is unsure about whether something they propose may breach e mail and internet guidance they should seek advice from the manager.

How data is stored and the Security of the pre-school ICT systems will be maintained.

The Oaks Nursery recognises that the quantity and variety of data held is expanding quickly. At The Oaks Nursery data on current children is stored on both the nursery laptop and the Administrator's laptop both of which are password protected. This data is recorded, processed, transferred and made available according to the Data Protection Act 1998. The security of the setting's computer systems will be reviewed regularly and virus protection kept up to date.

Use of the website

The nursery is developing it's website to provide information to prospective parents and carers and to keep parents informed of forthcoming events, topics, term dates and any

closures. (www.oaksnursery.org.uk). Photographs of children will only appear on the website with parents' permission and will not include the child's full name. The manager, administrator and an allocated member of staff are responsible for updating and supervising the website.

Procedure for Dealing with E Safety Issues

- The manager will ensure that the policy is implemented effectively and that all staff members and parents / carers are made aware of our E safety policy.
- Staff will be encouraged to tell the designated safeguarding officer or manager immediately if they encounter any material that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- All members of nursery will be aware of the procedure for dealing with issues relating to e safety.
- Any complaint about staff misuse will be referred to the safeguarding designating person – Becky Tyler (Manager) or Tracey Devlin (Deputy Manager).
- The manager or safeguarding designated person will have the responsibility for handling incidents and will decide what action to take
- Disciplinary action could be taken should the setting be brought into disrepute

The person with responsibility for E Safety is Becky Tyler

FEES AND CHARGES POLICY

The Oaks Nursery staff and committee endeavour to provide the best childcare and education at an affordable rate for the community. This policy sets out our standards for setting and payment of fees.

Procedures

- 1) The Committee will endeavour to maintain the Nursery fees at a level that will be accessible to the whole Community, but will have to take into consideration the impact of overheads, operating levels, cost of living increases and inflation.
- 2) The fees will be reviewed annually. Parents and carers will be given a minimum of half a terms notice of any increase in fees.
- 3) Fees will be agreed by majority vote at a committee meeting, after recommendations have been proposed by the Treasurer and seconded by the Chair. Fee decisions must be backed by sound financial analysis from the Treasurer. Should the situation arise whereby the Committee are equally divided, then the Chair shall have the deciding vote. If the Chair and Treasurer are concerned that the committee decision could put the nursery into financial jeopardy, they have the right to adjourn in order to present stronger financial evidence to the Committee and call for a re-vote.
- 4) Eligible children will be funded for 38 weeks per year for the amount of hours requested on the completed Parental Declaration up to a maximum of 570 hours over 38 weeks. (eg a child claiming 14 hours per week will be entitled to 14 x 38 hours (532 hours) of funded education per year).
- 5) Fees will be charged for each hour that the child is registered to attend over and above their funded hours and will be invoiced in advance at the beginning of terms 1, 3 and 5.
- 6) Invoices should be paid by the date stated on the invoice or by a payment plan as agreed with the manager. Where a payment plan is agreed full settlement of the invoice must be made by the end of each full term (i.e. terms 2, 4 and 6). Payment of invoices can also be made using a recognised Childcare Voucher Scheme.
- 7) Where full payment is not received on time a 'late payment fee' of £20 will be charged. If fees are not paid within 2 weeks of the due date or by the agreed payment plan the child will only be permitted to attend for their funded hours.
- 8) Children will be accepted under the Free for 2 (FF2) scheme to a maximum of 3 children under the scheme at any time. Funding will be subject to KCC eligibility criteria and checks. Children will not be permitted to start under the FF2 scheme until eligibility has been confirmed.
- 9) Fees must still be paid if children are absent. Where a child has to be absent for an extended period the Manager and Chair should be consulted and a decision will be made about fees.

- 10) If the nursery has to close for reasons beyond our control such as due to adverse weather, we will be unable to offer refunds due to the requirement to still pay staff in these circumstances.
- 11) Once a child has been guaranteed a place or has started at the nursery the parent or carer must give a minimum of 6 weeks notice if they are to withdraw their child from the setting. Except in exceptional circumstances, if this notice is not given then they will be liable for the fees even if they do not attend The Oaks Nursery during this period.
- 12) Spare sessions can be booked on an ad hoc basis and will be billed with payment due within 7 days.

The Manager and Committee of The Oaks Nursery aim to be sympathetic and confidential. If you have any difficulties with payments please speak to the Manager – Becky Tyler

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Risk assessment

The Nursery believes that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our nursery a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers by assessing and minimising the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

Procedures:

- Our risk assessment process covers adults and children and includes:
 - checking for and noting hazards and risks indoors and outdoors, and in our premises and for activities.
 - assessing the level of risk and who may be affected;
 - deciding which areas need attention; and
 - developing an action plan that specifies the action required, the time scales for action, the person responsible for the action and any funding required.
- Where more than five staff and volunteers are employed the risk assessment is written and is reviewed regularly.
- We maintain lists of health and safety issues, which are checked daily before the session begins as well as those that are checked on a weekly and termly basis when a full risk assessment is carried out.

Nappy Changing Policy

At The Oaks Nursery no child is excluded from participating in our setting who may, for any reason, not yet be toilet trained and who may still be wearing nappies or equivalent. We work with parents towards toilet training, unless there are medical or other developmental reasons why this may not be appropriate at the time.

We make necessary adjustments to our bathroom provision and hygiene practice in order to accommodate children who are not yet toilet trained.

We see toilet training as a self-care skill that children have the opportunity to learn with the full support and non-judgemental concern of adults.

Procedures

- Young children from two years should wear 'pull-ups' or other types of trainer pants as soon as they are comfortable with this and their parents agree
- Key persons undertake changing young children in their key groups; other staff member change them if the key person is absent
- Changing areas are warm and they are safe areas to lay children if they need to have their bottoms cleaned.
- Each child has their own bag to hand with their nappies or 'pull-ups' and changing wipes
- Gloves and aprons are put on before changing starts and the areas are prepared.
- All staff are familiar with the hygiene procedures and carry these out when changing nappies.
- In addition, key persons ensure that nappy changing is relaxed and a time to promote independence in young children
- Young children are encouraged to take an interest in using the toilet; they may just want to sit on it and talk to a friend who is also using the toilet.
- Key persons are gentle when changing; they avoid pulling faces and making negative comments about 'nappy contents'
- Key persons do not make any inappropriate comments about young children's genitals when changing their nappies.
- Nappies and 'Pull ups' are disposed of hygienically. Any soil (faeces) in nappies or pull ups is flushed down the toilet and the nappy/pull up is double bagged and disposed in the pedal operated hands free bin which is situated in the staff toilet and emptied twice daily.
- The changing mat is cleaned using anti-bacterial spray
- The key person, who changes a child, is required to complete the Nappy Changing Book with all required details.

NB if young children are left in wet or soiled nappies/ pull-ups in the setting this may constitute neglect and will be a disciplinary matter. Settings have a 'duty of care' towards children's personal needs.

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION POLICY

The Oaks Nursery is committed to provide the best possible care to its children and to safeguarding and promoting welfare of young children. The nursery is also committed to providing a supportive working environment for all its members of staff. The nursery recognises that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staffs who share this commitment.

The aims of the nursery's recruitment policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equitably and consistently
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, disability and age
- to ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance including the recommendations of the Department for Education (DfE) in "safeguarding children: safer recruitment and selection in education settings" and the code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- to ensure that the nursery meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Recruitment and selection procedure

- All applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and employment history and their suitability for the role.
- Applicants will receive a job description and person specification for the role applied for.
- The applicant may then be invited to spend some time in the Nursery on informal basis prior to attending a formal interview at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and signing of a contract incorporating the nursery's standard terms and conditions of employment
- the receipt of two references (one of which should be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the nursery considers satisfactory
- the receipt of a satisfactory enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service

If the above conditions are satisfied and the offer is accepted then the applicant will be issued with a contract of employment as confirmation of employment.

All appointments are subject to 1 term probationary period during which the notice period to terminate the employment for whatever reason, by either the employee or the nursery is 4 weeks. The nursery also reserves the right to extend this

probationary period should it deem this necessary.

Pre – employment checks

In accordance with the recommendations of the DfE in “safeguarding children; safer recruitment and selection in education settings” the nursery carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

Verification of identity and address:

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring the following evidence of identity, address and qualifications

- current driving licence or passport or full birth certificate; and
- two utility bills or statements (from different sources) showing their name and home address; and
- documentation confirming their national insurance number (P45, P60 or national insurance card); and
- documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form.

References

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two satisfactory references, one of which should be from the applicant’s current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children, then the second referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative. All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. All referees will be sent a copy of the job description and a person specification for the role which the applicant has applied for. If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following:

- the applicant’s dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance, sickness and disciplinary record
- whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children
- whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relates to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people

The nursery will only accept references obtained directly from the referee. It will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or an open reference or testimonials.

The nursery will compare all references with any information given on the application form. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant before any appointment is confirmed.

Criminal record check

Due to the nature of the work, the nursery applies for criminal record certificates from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of all prospective staff members, directors and volunteers.

Retention and security of disclosure information

The nursery's policy is to observe the guidance issued or supported by the DBS on the use of disclosure information. In particular, the nursery will:

- store disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the DBS in locked cabinets, access to which will be restricted to specific members of staff
- not retain disclosure information or any associated correspondence for longer than is necessary. In most cases the nursery will not retain such information for longer than 6 months.

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Whistleblowing can be defined as raising a concern about a malpractice within an organisation.

At the Oaks Nursery we are committed to delivering a high quality pre-school service, promoting organisational accountability and maintaining public confidence. We are committed to safeguarding children and adults and promoting the welfare of every child, and therefore, expect the highest possible standards of openness. To safeguard each individual child and users of our provision, reports of malpractice are taken seriously. It is the duty of every employee and volunteer to report situations of witnessed and/or suspected malpractice or misconduct. The Oaks Nursery recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of fear of reprisals from those responsible.

This policy provides individuals at The Oaks Nursery protection from victimisation or punishment where they raise a genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice in a setting or during an organised trip or outing. This also includes any action likely to bring The Oaks Nursery into disrepute. The policy is in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which encourages people to raise concerns about misconduct or malpractice in the workplace, in order to promote good governance and accountability. Such behaviour would include:

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation
- Danger to health and safety of an individual and/or environment
- Deliberate concealment of information in relation to any of the above

Procedure

- Any staff member, parent/carer, or volunteer who, acting in good faith, has a concern about misconduct or malpractice at The Oaks Nursery, should in the first instance inform the manager of their concerns. If the issue concerns the Manager then the Chair of the Committee should be informed. If it relates to the Chair then Ofsted should be contacted for advice on the number below.
- The report, written or verbal, should set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible, and the reason why there are concerns.
- In every instance it is advised to report concerns early
- Most concerns will be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- All concerns will be investigated by the Manager or Chairperson as quickly and efficiently as possible and resolved.
- The Manager will then advise the staff member, parent/carer or volunteer what action will be taken in relation to the issue raised without a breach of confidentiality
- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the staff, parent/carer or volunteer should put their concerns in writing to the Chair of the Committee.
- Confidentiality will be maintained at all times and every effort will be made to ensure the person raising the concern will not suffer any personal detriment as a result of voicing their concerns and likewise the member of staff under investigation.

- Any malicious and unfounded reports will be considered for disciplinary action.
- If an employee, parent/carer or volunteer feels that the matter cannot be dealt with either the manager or the Chairperson they should contact Ofsted direct on 0300 123 1231 for advice on what steps to take.
- All documentation will be kept securely in staff records.

