THE BUMBLEBEE CHILDREN'S CHARITY
miracles in movement

1.15 Making a complaint policy

Policy statement

The Bumblebee Children's Charity believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve The Bumblebee Children's Charity and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of The Bumblebee Children's Charity. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns. We aim to bring all concerns about the running of The Bumblebee Children's Charity to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

The Bumblebee Children's Charity is committed to the highest standards of quality, openness and accountability. This manifests itself through team meetings, informal one to one's between the board of trustees and staff, complaints procedure, disciplinary and grievance procedures. As part of that commitment, we encourage all staff and others with serious concerns about any aspect of the work to come forward and express their concerns. In many cases, concerns or complaints will be dealt with through the procedures outlined below.

Whistle Blowing

Procedures

The following procedures are proposed to make provision for anyone to disclose information of suspected malpractice within The Bumblebee Children's Charity on a confidential basis and to be protected against victimisation or dismissal.

The openness and accountability to which we commit relates to any concerns regarding any of the following:

- A criminal offence
- Financial frauds and malpractice
- Other types of corruption
- Attempts to deliberately cover up information
- Abuse or neglect of vulnerable people

- Damage to the environment
- Failure to deliver proper standards of service
- Damaging personal conflicts at senior level
- Bullying, harassment or victimisation in the work place
- Breach of a legal obligation
- Danger to health or safely of an individual

Concerns should be reported at an early stage before problems have a chance to become serious. We will support concerned employees and protect them from reprisals or victimisation. Confidentiality will be respected.

Anyone found trying to discourage a concerned employee from coming forward to express a concern will be subject to disciplinary action. In the same way, anyone criticising or victimising an employee as a result of a concern being expressed will also face disciplinary action.

Who to Contact

In the first instance, anyone wishing to report a concern should do so, in confidence, with the charity administrator. If for some reason this is not possible then with a Trustee.

If policy and procedures within the organisation are working properly there should be no need for contact to be with an external agency to express concerns. However, if our internal procedures have been exhausted, then the concerns may be reported as follows:

- If the problem involves a very senior member of staff of the organisation, contact the Board of Trustees.
- In the case of criminal offence, contact the Police and notify the Chief Executive or Chair.
- In the case of abuse of vulnerable people, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO.)
- In the case of abuse of public funds, contact the Charity Commissioners Office and notify the Board of the Trustees.
- In the case of any fraud, contact the external auditors and notify the Board of Trustees.

- Matters should not be raised with the press or other media (to do so will result in disciplinary action.)

Dealing with Concerns

All concerns will be investigated carefully and thoroughly. If appropriate, results of investigations and any action that is proposed will be passed on to the person expressing the initial concern. However, confidentiality needs to be maintained at all times.

If it is found that malicious, unfounded allegations have been made this will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

The Bumblebee Children's Charity is required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond. This is to be made available to parents.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of The Bumblebee Children's Charity provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with a member of the Senior Team.
- 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 Board of trustees
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints the form for recording the complaint may be completed with the person in charge and signed by the parent.
- The Bumblebee Children's Charity will store all information relating to the complaint and the investigation in a separate file kept securely in the office.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Senior Team meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.

- Parents must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Board of the Trustees. The parent may have a friend or partner present if required and the Administrator should have the support of a trustee 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.
- This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three meeting, the parent and The Bumblebee Children's Charity cannot reach agreement, an external mediator is invited to help to settle the complaint. This person should be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.
- Staff or volunteers within the Early Years Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with The Bumblebee Children's Charity personnel (A Senior Team and a Trustee) 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 s/he gives.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, a member of the Senior Team and a trustee representative is held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator is present at the meeting if all parties think this will help a decision to be reached.

- A record of this 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.

Records

- A record of complaints against The Bumblebee Children's Charity and/or the children and/or the adults working in The Bumblebee Children's Charity 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 Record which is available for parents on request.

This Policy was adopted by The Bumblebee Children's Charity and will be reviewed yearly.

Date	July 2026
Name of signatory	Lindsay Warne
Role of signatory	Charity Administrator

Signed on behalf of the Trustees