



Spotlight on Whistleblowing



Questions to ask yourself

Does your staff team know your whistleblowing procedure?

Would they be confident to follow the whistleblowing process?

Do they know who the LADO is?

Case Study: Vanessa George Little Ted's Nursery Plymouth

Vanessa George, a nursery worker, and mother of two, was charged with seven offences, including two of sexual assault by penetration and two of sexual assault by touching whilst employed by Little Ted's Nursery. She was also charged with making, possessing and distributing indecent images of children.

A married mother with two children, George appeared to be a valued member within her local community and had taken up the post at Little Ted's nursery some three years earlier. At some point in 2008, Vanessa George began an online relationship with Colin Blanchard (previously convicted of possessing indecent images of children). It was at this time that colleagues would later claim that they noticed a change in her behaviour. George's conduct and sexualised behaviour in the nursery was not noted as a clear 'sign' that they may have a sexual predator in their midst.

Parents were angry that George was able to get such one-to-one access with children, and accused the nursery of poor management and claim that because the workers were good friends, the regime was too slack.

Conclusion

The Serious Case Review (SCR) found there was no supervisory framework implemented at the nursery and as already demonstrated, the weak manager modelled blurred, professional boundaries and selective resistance to contact with outside agencies

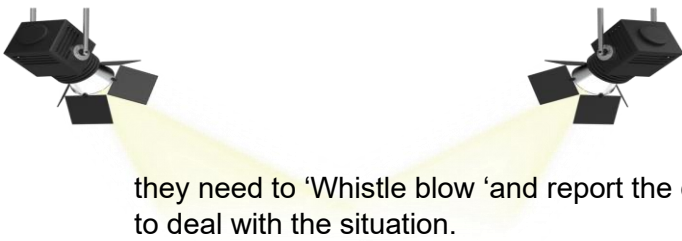
Poor regulation, inadequate staff training and a lack of supervision created an "ideal environment" in which nursery worker Vanessa George could abuse children in her care

What is Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is when someone who works in or for an organisation passes on information which they reasonably believe shows wrongdoing or a cover-up by that organisation. For example, the information may be about activity that is illegal or that creates risks to the health and safety of others. The concern may relate to something that has happened, is happening or that a person may fear will happen in the future.

What is an example of Whistleblowing in a childcare setting?

The childcare worker may have discussed a dangerous situation that is unlawful with the manager or head, a number of times, and nothing has been done about it. In this situation,



they need to 'Whistle blow' and report the concerns directly to an external body best suited to deal with the situation.

EYFS 3.24 states

Providers must train all staff to understand their safeguarding policy and procedures and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. These may include

- Inappropriate behaviour from practitioners, or any other person working with the children. This could include inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to-one attention beyond what is required through their role; or inappropriate sharing of images.

Local Safeguarding Procedures state

All staff should be made aware of the organisation's whistleblowing policy and feel confident to voice concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

If a member of staff believes that a reported allegation or concern is not being dealt with appropriately by their organisation, they should report the matter to the LADO.

The Role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The LADO is responsible for the management and oversight of allegations made against people who **work** or **volunteer** with children.

What do I do if I have concerns about someone working with children? Any allegations of abuse **MUST** be reported to the LADO within 24hours

Mobile 07927 681858 LADO@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk



LADO Referral
Form.docx

A referral to the LADO would be made when.....

A person who works with children is alleged to have:

- 1) Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child.
- 2) Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- 3) Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

The LADO will advise you on what to do and if required will request you to complete a referral form.

[Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers who Work with... \(trixonline.co.uk\)](http://trixonline.co.uk)

[Whistleblowing or Raising Concerns at Work \(trixonline.co.uk\)](http://trixonline.co.uk)



Further Information

[Slough Safeguarding Children Partnership - Whistleblowing \(sloughsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk\)](http://sloughsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk)

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/> - support for professionals who are worried about how child protection issues are being handled in their workplace

<https://protect-advice.org.uk/> - free confidential whistleblowing advice

<https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whistleblowing-about-childrens-social-care-services-to-ofsted/sharing-concerns-and-information-with-ofsted-about-childrens-social-care-services>