

Section 5 Contents

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5.1 Staffing and recruitment

The Play Place Group has a non-discriminatory approach to employment and recruitment. The Play Place group operates a fair recruitment process and adheres to and recognises that it is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of any of the nine 'protected characteristics' in the Equality Act 2010. These are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

In the first instance Directors must agree advertising for staff before recruitment starts.

Requirements for post are agreed and documented. All candidates who respond to an advert will then be provided with:

- An application form
- Job description
- Person specification
- DBS information
- Other relevant information for the post

The post will be advertised on credited sites.

Posts are advertised for an agreed duration with Directors.

A short-listing process will take place as follows:

1. Long list and short listing are processed from applications.
2. Candidates are informed of an interview in a formal environment (office based).
3. Candidates will be sent a letter offering an interview.
4. Candidates will need to bring to the interview appropriate paperwork, passport or identity card being the upmost importance.

The interview process will take place as follows:

1. Interviews will take place in an appropriate environment.
2. Appropriate staff will lead interview, usually senior level and above.
3. Interview questions will be screened with relevance to the post.
4. Each question will relate directly to the person specification.
5. A fair process of points system will maintain equality. The panel will score each answer given.
6. Practical participation may be required and safeguards will be maintained effectively.
7. Candidates will have time to ask questions.
8. Candidates will be informed of interview outcomes within an agreed time frame.
9. Candidates can be informed by telephone but all successful candidates must have a letter of outcome.

Employment

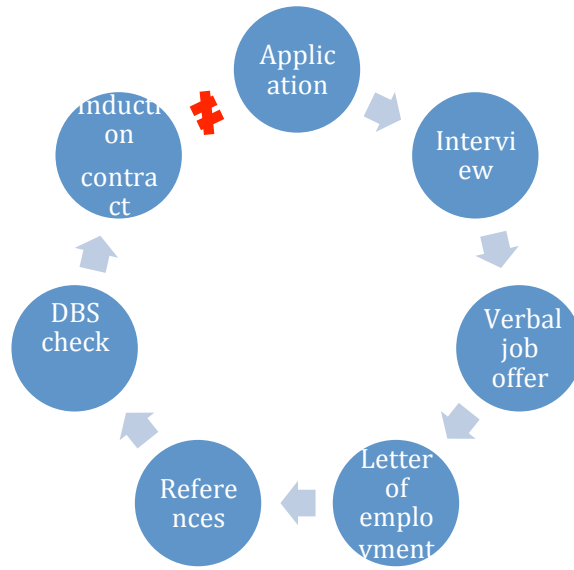
New staff must receive a letter that will confirm the following:

1. Salary
2. Start date/ hour
3. Position
4. Place of work

Once the post is agreed:

1. Two references will be taken up –written returns. Verbal references must be followed up with a hard copy.
2. DBS check applied for, or cross referenced
3. Banking details processed.
4. Contracts will be received, this can be before the end of probationary period
5. Personnel handbooks are available on line or as hard copies.
6. Induction period starts.
7. A probation period is agreed.
8. Performances will be assessed and monitored.
9. In addition to probation periods, all staff members are offered regular supervision and support sessions.

In the interest of fairness promotional opportunities, training and pay increments will be made available to staff as opportunities arise.



5.2 Staff training

The Play Place Group has an on-going programme of training and development for all our staff.

All new staff are offered a full induction that covers all key areas, practice, policies and expectations of the worker. Regular supervisions allow staff opportunity to discuss how things are going.

Each staff member has a yearly appraisal with his or her line manager. This time will be used to explore personal development opportunities, not only in relation to training courses but also exploring other training opportunities and developmental experiences.

Staff will be expected to access training opportunities to:

1. Develop their own personal abilities and skills within a given field.
2. Further their skills and knowledge.
3. Develop confidence and self esteem.
4. Raise standards.
5. Keep updated.
6. Adhere to regulations and requirements within the regulatory framework.

Play Place expects staff to:

1. Attend staff meetings and group training as requested.
2. Utilise their new knowledge and ideas within their setting.
3. Relate and discuss with staff.
4. Ensure that managers and staff team support new ideas and developments.
5. Welcome other agencies into the setting.
6. Record staff training and inform Directors of staff development.
7. Have access to training manuals and information.

Play Place will:

1. Ensure information from other organisations and publications, local and central government sites are accessible and open opportunities to training and development.
2. Support staff with appropriate training requests.
3. Pay training providers where applicable and as budgets allows.
4. Access funding when available.
5. Support staff feedback and concerns.
6. Give appropriate time off for studies.
7. Welcome training providers into settings.
8. Keep an overall account of staff development and support areas of improvement.

5.3 Volunteers and students

Volunteers and students play an important part in the running of the group of companies and should be made to feel welcome and part of the team in any setting they work.

Longer-term volunteers should undergo the same recruitment process as paid staff.

We expect any volunteers to abide by the following:

1. Volunteers and students are expected to have DBS checks completed.
2. Provide the necessary documentation from schools and colleges.
3. They will be expected to read the policies appropriate to their setting as these form the basis of good practice.
4. We expect to have personal details on record for emergency use.
5. Names will be entered on a daily register in case of an emergency evacuation.
6. Students as requested will carry out daily tasks. These tasks will be in line with the students study curriculum.
7. Appropriate clothing must be worn at all times, and in line with setting policies.
8. Any concerns regarding children and young people must be drawn to the attention of the manager.
9. Students and volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves with daily operational plans.
10. Students and volunteers are expected to have good contact with all children and young people, acknowledging their individual needs.
11. Volunteers and students will be expected to work alongside another member of staff and at no time will be left unattended.
12. Staff and volunteers may be expected to attend outings with a child or young person but will always have another member of staff present.
13. Managers will liaise with course tutors and feedback where appropriate
14. All students and volunteers must adhere to the policies and procedures of the Play Place Group.

5.4 Induction

At Play Place all staff will be subject to a six week induction process. This is to ensure that all staff can learn and adapt to their new role and become a fully effective member of the team. During the induction period staff will become familiar with the organisation, policies and procedures, staff teams, young people, children and their families, the environment and company expectations.

During an induction period staff will be given written information to read including copies of policies and procedures, all staff will be expected to comply with all information provided.

By the end of the first day staff should:

1. Had an inducting meeting with the manager.
2. Completed staff detail forms.
3. Received information on their role and requirements and have a clear understanding of them.
4. Read the company's policies and procedures, signed and dated them as understood.
5. Had a tour of the provision including staff toilets and outside areas.
6. Have been assigned a mentor where appropriate.
7. Had the financial procedure and payroll explained.
8. Had the emergency evacuation procedure including fire exits, appointed first aider and assembly points explained.
9. Been introduced to all staff in the setting.
10. Understand safety procedures including access codes, key fobs and keys.

By the end of the first week staff should:

1. Be able to access all equipment and resources.
2. Read through all risk assessments.
3. Demonstrated a fire drill.
4. Have an awareness of how the setting functions on a daily basis.
5. Is aware of all children's needs.
6. Have been introduced to all children, parents and carers.
7. Had a meeting with the Manager to discuss workload, progress and or any difficulties.

By the end of the fourth week staff should:

- Had an initial review meeting that covers information on how their role will support children across the seven areas of learning and development including EYFS, ECM and relevant documents.
- Have a clear understanding of safeguarding within the environment.
- Identify training needs.
- Workload.
- Progress and any difficulties.
- Clear targets will be set and reviewed at subsequent meetings.
- Discuss key worker system and be assigned key children.

By the end of the induction period staff should:

- Be able to demonstrate a capability to meet the requirements of the role to the standard set.
- Have completed their induction programme, and undertaken a review meeting with their line manager.
- Have organised regular supervisions and appraisal meetings
- Have been given their contract of employment

5.5 Non-attendance in the workplace

This policy ensures safeguards and good practice are put in place to maintain a fair system that monitors staff members non-attendance due to annual leave, time off in lieu, sickness and any other absences from the work place. Play Place has a diverse working culture therefore any time off the premises has to be reflective of the position and job role of the individual employee and within laws relating to 'Working Time Regulations Act 1998'.

Annual Leave

Entitlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full time staff are entitled to 20 days annual leave and 8 public holiday days. • Annual leave is pro rota accordingly for staff on part time hours. • Leave accrues monthly in advance, at the rate of one twelfth of the annual leave entitlement. It is line manager and directors responsibility to decide whether to authorise a request for leave in advance of accrual. • Term time staff and those working with schools will take annual leave entitlements within the school holiday period. • Annual leave will be taken on a half or full day basis. • New employee entitlement to annual leave will be proportionate to the amount of time left in the annual leave year. • Staff who are working out their notice period with unused annual leave, which has accrued but has not been taken, will be paid with the final salary; this will be subject to the usual deductions for tax and national insurance contributions.
Time Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual leave operates from April to March inclusively.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff may not carry forward unused annual leave, from one year to the next, unless they obtain prior approval from their line manager or director. • Staff may only carry forward a maximum of five days unused annual leave; additional days will be forfeited. Leave carried over must be taken by the end of the following annual leave year to which the unused time relates.
Procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An appropriate holiday form must be completed. • The form is to be submitted to the line manager to be agreed and verified. • Staff may only commit to leave plans on receipt of a signed annual leave form from the line manager who authorises requests for leave. • Once agreed, the annual leave request forms must be counter signed by a company director and passed to the Finance Director ahead of the leave being taken. • If the application for leave is refused, the line manager will notify the staff member as soon as possible. • If a staff members wishes to dispute a line manager's decision to decline an annual leave request, they may use the grievance procedure. • Where there are conflicting annual leave requirements, priority will be given to the member of staff whose request was received first. • Should staff take unauthorised annual leave, they may be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Time Off In Lieu (TOIL)

<p>Why TOIL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOIL (Time off in Lieu) - Lieu time is time off which staff members are allowed to take for hours worked beyond the working day (i.e. evenings and weekends). • TOIL allows staff to respond flexibly to unexpected service or personal needs. It also covers the occasional need to vary the working week, such as carrying out weekend projects and activities. • Toil normally is applied to staff on fixed term contracts and who's jobs require a flexible approach to hours worked.
<p>Expectations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will not build up more than two days in TOIL in each month, except in exceptional circumstances and with prior consent of their line manager/director. • TOIL must be taken in the same month as accrued unless agreed before with the line manager or a director. Lieu time built up and not taken will be lost. • Time off must be equal to time actually worked: i.e. there is no provision for time-and-a-half, double time, etc – if staff work two hours, they can claim two hours TOIL, regardless of whether the occasion is evening or weekend. • Where work requires an overnight stay, staff will build up TOIL for hours actually worked and travel time for their normal working hours only. • Staff will be responsible for completing their own TOIL recording sheet. • Any member of staff who is found to have abused the TOIL scheme may have to face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
<p>Procedure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A TOIL, annual leave and sick leave folder is retained on the Finance Directors desk. • Toil gained or taken must be recorded on this file and signature obtained from the immediate line manager or a company director.

Sick/Injury

<p>Notification of incapacity to work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff must notify us by telephone on the first day of incapacity and at the earliest possible opportunity. A voice message or text can be sent leaving details if there is no answer. • This should be no later than one hour before the normal start time. Notification the night before would assist us in finding a suitable replacement to cover absence. • Notification should be made personally where possible. • Staff should try to give some indication of the expected return date and notify us as soon as possible if this date changes.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the incapacity extends to more than seven days staff are required to notify us of your continued incapacity once a week thereafter, unless otherwise agreed. • Consistent leave from work due to illness may result in being asked to attend a medical.
Evidence of Incapacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctors certificates are not issued for short-term incapacity. In these cases of incapacity (up to seven calendar days) staff must sign a self-certification absence form on your return to work. • If a sickness has been (or staff know that it will be) for longer than seven days (whether or not they are working days) staff should see a doctor and make sure he or she gives them a medical certificate; this should be to us without delay. • Subsequently staff must supply us with consecutive doctors' medical certificates to cover the whole of your absence.
Payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are entitled to statutory sick pay (SSP) if they are absent because of sickness or injury provided they meet the criteria in the current SSP regulations. When staff are absent for four or more consecutive days, they will be paid SSP by us if you are eligible. This is treated as pay and is subject to normal deductions. • Qualifying days are the only days for which staff members are entitled to SSP. These days are normally their working days unless otherwise notified. The first three qualifying days of absence are waiting days for which SSP is not payable. Where a second or subsequent period of incapacity (of four days or more) occurs within 56 days of a previous period of incapacity, waiting days are not served again. • Where the circumstances of your incapacity are such that staff members are awarded any sum by way of compensation or damages (in respect of the incapacity from a third party), then any payments that we may have made to you because of the absence (including SSP) shall be repaid to us. This will include the amount not exceeding the amount of the compensation or damages paid by the third party and up to, but not exceeding, any amount paid by us.
Return to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff members should notify their Manager as soon as they know on which day you will be returning to work, if this differs from a date of return previously notified. • If staff members have been suffering from an infectious or contagious disease or illness they must not report for work without clearance from their own doctor. On return to work after any period of sickness/injury absence (including absence covered by a medical certificate), staff are also required to complete a self-certification absence form and hand this to the Line Manager. Upon returning to work staff may be interviewed by their Line Manager or Director for the purposes of ascertaining their well-being.

5.6 Finance

Play Place Group of companies is registered at:

Registered office: 21, Wayside, Fieldway, New Addington, Croydon CRO 9DX

Financial Management

Play Place group of companies must keep accurate financial records for salaries, funding and expenditures. The financial year will run from April to March yearly, a qualified accountant will be used for audit and accountability. Accounts will be shared with companies house, HMRC, local authority, commissioners, and other professional bodies where required.

Salaries

Staff members who are on a 'zero rated' contract (Youth Work and Road Show Teams)

Or

Staff members who are on a fixed term contract, but who have carried out pre-agreed additional hours (for which additional hours are payable).

In all cases it should be noted that:

1. All hours worked under either of the above arrangements must be on a pre-agreed basis, that is, additional hours will be agreed and stated ahead of the start of any piece of work.
2. Staff members who work irregular hours must keep their time sheets up to date on a weekly basis; back dated claims are unacceptable.
3. All timesheets should be signed by a line manager or Director.
4. All claims for pay must be submitted to the Finance Director before the 23rd of the same monthly period as the work carried out.
5. Claims submitted may include 'assumed regular work' to be carried out between the 23rd and 27th of each month. However any changes that occur after submission (i.e. sickness or unplanned absence) will be adjusted by the Finance and Administration Director at the next pay day.
6. Late claims will not be paid until the following month.

Income

Where fees or charges are applicable these should be paid by the agreed date. Play Place will maintain an effective financial management system.

1. Late payments will be dealt with through an informal verbal reminder in the first instance.
2. Payments that are not received within the agreed date will result in a written reminder being issued.
3. Further action will be agreed according to circumstance and as directed by the Managers.
4. The Finance Manager/Director along with the setting Manager will seek to draw down funds through local authority departments for children who are eligible. (E.g. two and three year funding)

Petty cash

Responsibility:

1. Petty cash will be stored and located in a safe place.
2. Petty cash will be an agreed amount of money.
3. Line Managers will have responsibilities for petty cash.

If petty cash is needed:

1. A petty cash voucher must be completed:
2. The voucher should show the amount, the reason why the cash is required and a signature of the recipient and the authorised person in charge.
3. It is expected that a receipt will later back all petty cash expenditure.
4. All receipts and signed petty cash vouchers must be stored appropriately.
5. A petty cash summary will be completed at least once a month/termly. All petty cash vouchers must be attached to the summary statement and the balance returned to the agreed amount.

5.7 Company vehicle and petrol claims

Play Place Group has a number of company cars, vans, people carriers and a mini bus. Additionally it is sometimes necessary for people to use their own vehicles for work activities. This policy relates to the use of these vehicles by staff and volunteers.

The policy is particularly relevant to:

- 1) Staff who are required to use their own cars for work (but not including travelling to and from the work setting).
- 2) Staff who are responsible for keeping a company vehicle for more than of one day.
- 3) Staff using company vehicles for a specific piece of work.

Own vehicle (regular and occasional users)

It is expected that staff will travel to and from their agreed work base independently and at their own cost. This may include travelling to local training courses or meetings.

If a personal vehicle is being used for a '**specific work purpose**' it may only be used if:

- 1) The vehicle has the relevant insurances (to include use in connection with business).
- 2) Tax is in date.
- 3) MOT is in date.
- 4) Log book is registered to the driver.
- 5) The Line Manager and a Director agree its use.

The vehicle must be in a clean and safe condition.

Where children and young people are being transported, safety implications should be considered and agreed, for example. Who is being carried and are there any 'working alone' implications.

On a pre-arranged basis only, it may be agreed to pay staff the national HMRC fuel allowance. Any such claim must be made using the Play Place Car Mileage Claim Form and submitted to the Finance and Administration Director before the 23rd of the same monthly period as the journey. Please do not back date mileage claims.

Company vehicles

Staff members who keep a company vehicle for more than one day must ensure that:

- The vehicle is kept clean and tidy inside and out and it is available to be used by other staff members as required.
- The vehicle is always ready for use and has no less than a quarter tank of fuel.
- The vehicle is covered for business and personal use. If in doubt, this should be double checked with the Finance and Administration Director.
- If the vehicle is to be used for personal and work use, claims for fuel used in business only must be made using the Play Place Mileage Claims form. Any such claim must be submitted to the Finance Director before the 23rd of the same monthly period as the journey. Please do not back date mileage claims.
- Before each journey the vehicle should be checked for any problems or new damage to the vehicle. Any such issues should be reported to Finance and Administration Director and recorded in writing.
- A log book is kept in each vehicle to record the mileage and destination of each work journey (or working day).
- They have the appropriate license for the vehicle they are driving (check restrictions on the license).

Staff using a company vehicle for one day (or a specific journey) must ensure that:

- The company vehicle is kept clean and tidy during the activity.
- The vehicle has no less than a quarter tank of petrol at the end of the activity.
- They check the vehicle for any problems or damage to the vehicle before use. Any such issues should be reported to the Finance and Administration Director and recorded in writing.
- The log book is completed showing the mileage and destination for each work journey.

- They have the appropriate licence for the vehicle they are driving (check restrictions on the licence).

Smoking is not permitted in or around any company vehicle at any time - It is illegal to smoke in our vehicles.

During the period of time that a member of staff is driving a Play Place vehicle or using their own for Play Place purposes, they must inform their line manager about any motoring accidents or incidents immediately. Failure to do so will affect insurance cover.

5.8 Harrasement in the workplace

All staff are employed on the understanding that bullying and harrasement of any kind will not be accepted or tolerated. All staff should respect each other and allow for individuality within the workforce.

1. Issues should be dealt with when they arise in a mediated environment.
2. All situations/allegations relating to bullying must be reported to the setting manager and Directors.
3. All issues will be dealt with sensitively.
4. All details will be recorded in staff records.
5. The situation will be logged with our HR Buisness services.
6. If the allegations are upheld, disciplinary and grievence procedures will be started.

5.9 Investigation procedure for staff

The following procedures are for all Play Place employees including those employed on a temporary basis.

Minor disagreement

Minor disagreements among staff in a setting, or between staff and line managers can usually be resolved at the regular staff management meetings or informally by discussion.

Serious situations

A more serious situation arises when a dispute cannot be resolved, or when a senior manager is dissatisfied with the conduct or activities of an employee. In this event the disciplinary matter will be dealt with as follows:

If it is felt appropriate, verbal warning will be given. The employer will explain the complaint and give the employee full opportunity to state his/her case. If the complaint is still considered to be appropriate, the employee will be told:

1. What action should be taken to correct their conduct.
2. That she or he will be given reasonable time to rectify matters.
3. That if she or he fails to improve, and then further action will be taken.
4. That a record of the warning will be kept.
5. That she or he can appeal against the decision.

If the employee fails to correct her or his conduct, further action will be necessary:

1. The employee will be interviewed and given the opportunity to state their case as before.
2. If a further formal warning is considered to be appropriate, this will be explained to the employee and a letter confirming this decision will be sent to the employee.
3. The letter will contain a clear reprimand and the reason for it.
4. Explain what corrective action is required and what reasonable time will be given for improvement.
5. Failure to improve will result in further disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal.
6. The employee has the right to appeal against the decision.

If the employee still fails to correct her/his conduct then:

1. The employee will again be interviewed and given opportunity to state their case as before.
2. If the decision is to dismiss the employee, they will be given a notice of dismissal, stating the reason for dismissal and giving details of the right to appeal.
3. If progress is satisfactory within the time given to rectify matters, the record of warning will be maintained for Play Place records.
4. The employee has the right to be accompanied by a colleague or union representative during any interview.

Appeals

The employee has the right to appeal in writing to the Play Place Group within five days of the disciplinary interview.

Complaints

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer the following procedure will be adhered to:

1. The manager receiving the complaint will arrange to speak to the complainant in a quiet place and at an appropriate time.
2. The manager will listen to the complaint and document it accurately.

The complainant will be informed of the planned action that will follow which may include:

If there is a serious complaint of misconduct, lack of safeguarding or child abuse.

1. A meeting will be called immediately (or at the earliest convenience) with the member of staff in question to outline the allegations contents and to invite them to respond.
2. Staff who witnessed the situation will be asked to write a full report as evidence to what they had seen.
3. If the allegation is one of abuse, the member of staff will be informed that Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will take a lead and staff will receive instructions on how to proceed.
4. Where appropriate Ofsted, commissioning bodies and our HR Company will be informed of the allegation immediately, and asked to offer their support and guidance; the Insurance company must be notified.

5. The staff member in question may be asked to leave work subject to further investigation and discussion. Staff members must be reassured that this is normal practice whilst an investigation takes place.
6. If found guilty of serious misconduct the employees contract will be terminated.

If the complaint is one of less serious conduct:

1. A meeting will be held at the earliest convenience with the member of staff in question to discuss the allegations and invite them to respond.
2. The manager will assess the complaint and the response offered by the staff member and agrees an appropriate way forward.
3. All discussions that take place should be carefully documented and filed.
4. The manager will access the information given. If deemed guilty, the staff member may be given a verbal or written warning.
5. The complainant and staff member should be informed in writing of any actions that have been taken.
6. If the staff member is found to be at fault beyond reasonable doubt, and repeats the same act, a Director will be notified and advice regarding employment law and action plans will be sought from our HR Company.
7. Agreements reached with the member of staff will be reviewed at a later stage.

Definitions

Gross misconduct	General complaints
Swearing at children or parents Hitting children or parents Drunk on duty Taking unprescribed drugs on duty Sexually inappropriate behaviour	Repeated late attendance Inappropriate dress Contents of curriculum Lost property Method of working/style Attitude

5.10 Whistle Blowing

All staff should be aware of child protection and safeguarding procedures, including procedures for dealing with allegations. Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult, it is particularly important where the welfare of children and young people may be at risk.

Reasons for whistle blowing:

1. Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behavior.
2. To prevent the problem worsening or widening.
3. To protect or reduce risks to others.
4. To prevent becoming implicated yourself.

What stops people from whistle blowing:

1. Starting a chain of events that spirals.
2. Disrupting the work of the setting.
3. Fear of getting it wrong.
4. Fear of repercussions or damaging careers.
5. Fear of not being believed.

How to raise a concern:

1. A member of staff should voice any concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as they feel they can. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken.
2. The concern should be raised with the immediate Manager, Director, or the Designated Safeguarding Officer or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
3. The staff member will be asked to put their concerns down in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where they can.
4. A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

What happens next?

1. You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries.
2. Play Place has a responsibility to protect the member of staff from harassment or victimisation.
3. No action will be taken against the member of staff if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
4. Allegations made frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain will be seen in a different light and disciplinary action may be taken.

Self-reporting:

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, or perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff members have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most situations, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children and young people.

Further advice and support:

It is recognised that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from the line manager or directors.