

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Statement of Intent

We aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We aim to offer a welcome to each individual child and family and to provide a warm and caring environment within which all children can learn and develop as they play.

Aim

We believe children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community generally and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our group at any time. Many concerns can be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff.

Methods;

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure.

How to complain:

Stage 1

Any parent/carers uneasy about any aspect of the pre-school's provision talks over, first of all, their worries and anxieties with the child's keyperson. If the parent is not happy with the keyperson's response or wishes to complain about the keyperson or any other member of staff, he/she will be directed to the setting manager to discuss. If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to Stage 2 of the procedure.

If the complaint is about the setting manager, the setting manager is asked to forward the complaint verbally or in writing to the preschool committee chairperson or the parent can email them directly using the emails on the website. This will then be investigated and provided time to feedback to the parent within 28 days. If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the outcome, move to stage 4.

Stage 2

Put the concerns or complaint in writing to the pre-school manager. This will then be investigated and provided time to feedback to the parent within 28 days. The preschool committee chairperson will be notified.

Most complaints should be able to be resolved informally at Stage 1 or at Stage 2. If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, the parent moves to Stage 3 of the procedure.

Stage 3

If the parent is still not satisfied, the setting manager is asked to forward the complaint verbally or in writing to the preschool committee chairperson or the parent can email them directly using the email on the website. This will then be investigated and provided time to feedback to the parent within 14 days. If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, the parent moves to Stage 4.

Stage 4

The parent requests a meeting with the pre-school manager and the chair of the management committee. Both the parent and the pre-school manager may have a friend or partner present if required. An agreed written record of the discussion is made. 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.

Stage 5

If at the Stage 4 meeting the parent and pre-school 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 of the Early Years Department are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators. The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. They can hold separate meetings with the pre-school personnel (pre-school manager 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 they give.

Stage 6

When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the pre-school manager and the owner/chair of the management committee 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. The signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children's Board (BSCP)

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements are adhered to.

**The address and telephone number of Ofsted – National Business Unit, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street,
Manchester, M1 2WD
0300 123 4666**

These details are displayed on our pre-school's notice board and are provided in our welcome packs. If a child appears to be at risk, our pre-school follows the procedures of the BSCP in our local authority.

In these cases, both the parent and the pre-school are informed and the pre-school manager works with Ofsted or the BSCP to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint followed by appropriate action.

RECORDS

A record of complaints against our pre-school and/or the children and/or the adults working in our pre-school is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint, how the complaint was managed and the outcome. These records are kept for 3 years from the date the initial complaint was made. The outcome of complaints is recorded in our Summary Complaints Record and is made available to parents and Ofsted.

