

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Statement of intent

Our pre-school 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 our pre-school and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the pre-school. 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.

Aim

We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our pre-school to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

Methods

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure.

How to complain

Stage 1

- Any parent who is uneasy about an aspect of the pre-school's provision talks over, first of all, his/her worries and anxieties with the pre-school leader.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent should put the concerns or complaint in writing to the pre-school leader and give a copy of the letter to the chair of the committee.
- If the complaint is about the pre-school leader, then the Chair will deal with it. If the complaint involves the Chair, then the Secretary or another member of the Committee will deal with it. The same process, detailed below, should be followed.
- Written complaints from parents are filed in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the pre-school leader may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the pre-school leader (or Chair if they have been dealing with the complaint) meet with the parent to discuss the outcome.

- Parents must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.
- Is the complaint resolved at this stage, the summary is logged in the Complaints Summary Record. The pre-school leader should also advise the Chair that the complaint has been resolved.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she should request a meeting with the pre-school leader and the Committee Chair. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the pre-school leader should have the support of the Committee Chair or, in his/her absence, the Secretary present. Depending on the context of the complaint, it may be prudent for the Chair/ Secretary to talk to both the parent and the staff member separately and then arrange the meeting with all parties to resolve the situation.
- 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. Is the complaint resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If at the Stage 3 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 or volunteers within the Pre-school Learning Alliance or Leeds Education are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussion confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the pre-school personnel (pre-school leaders 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 s/he gives.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the pre-school leader and the 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. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

The role of Ofsted

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 a duty to ensure that the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.

The address and telephone number of Ofsted are:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

These details are displayed on our pre-school's notice board.

If a child appears to be at risk, our pre-school follows our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the setting leader works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board 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 the pre-school is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.

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 to Ofsted inspectors.

In accordance with Ofsted regulations, we will share an account of the findings of any investigation and the action, if any, that was taken or that we intend to take as a result of the investigations with parents at the setting. We will do this within 28 days from the date the complaint was made by sharing the Provider Complaints Record, adhering to recommendations regarding confidentiality and anonymity. If we think it is appropriate, we will send a separate letter to the parent who made the complaint giving more detail.

Nursery Education Grant

Parents/ carers with queries regarding the provision of the Free Early Education entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds should contact:

PO Box 837,
Family Information Service,
Learning Improvement,
Civic Hall,
LS1 1UR

Telephone number: 0113 378 9700

Email: family.info@leeds.gov.uk

<https://familyinformation.leeds.gov.uk>

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