



Complaints Procedure

Date reviewed: 13.09.2021

Policy Statement

We believe 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 with 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 our Pre-school to a satisfactory conclusion for all the parties involved.

Procedures

We will keep a written record of all complaints that reach stage 2 and above, and their outcome. This is made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors on request. A full procedure is set out in the Complaint Investigation Record (Early Years Alliance 2015) which acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the Pre-school's provision talks over, their concerns with the Practice manager in the first instance.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- We record the issue, and how it was resolved, in the child's file.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent puts the concerns or complaint in writing to the Practice Manager and the Chairperson of the Management Committee.
- We make our 'Compliments, Suggestions and Feedback Investigation Record' available for all parents on our website and this form can be used (with the help of the Practice Manager if necessary) by parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints and signed by the parent.
- We will store all information relating to written complaints from parents in their child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, our Practice Manager 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 Practice Manager or Chairperson meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- We inform parents of the outcome of the investigation within 28 working days of receipt of the written complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged on the Complaints Investigation Record which is made available to Ofsted on request.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Practice Manager and the Chair of the Management Committee. The meeting should take place within 28 working days of receipt of the request and the parent may have a friend or partner present if they prefer and the Practice Manager should have support of the management team.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All 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 on the Complaints Investigation Record Form.

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 Early Years Alliance 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 (Practice Manager and Chairperson 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 Practice Manager 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 the Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills, (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board or Local Safeguarding Partners and the Information Commissioner’s Office.

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaint’s procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the Pre-school’s registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.

- Parents can complain to Ofsted by telephone or in writing at:

Ofsted National Business Unit, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Ofsted Complaints line: 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 the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board or Local Safeguarding Partners.
- In these cases, both the parent and Pre-school are informed, and the Practice Manager works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board or Local Safeguarding Partners to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint followed by appropriate action.
- The Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) can be contacted if you have made a complaint about the way your data is being handled and remain dissatisfied after raising your concern with us. For further information about how we handle your data, please refer to our Privacy Notice given to you when you have confirmed your child’s start date at our Pre-school. The ICO can be contacted at the Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or ico.org.uk.

Records

- A record of complaints against our Pre-school or the children or the adults working in our Pre-school is kept, for at least 3 years; including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed on our Complaints Investigation Record Form.
- Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained when filling in this form so that the person making the complaint and any adults or children it refers to cannot be identified.
- The outcome of all complaints is, recorded in our Complaint Investigation Record, which is available for parents and Ofsted Inspectors to view on request.

This policy was reviewed by Hanslope Pre-school on 13th September 2021

Date to be reviewed 13th September 2022

Signed on behalf of Hanslope Pre-school

By DWatson Chairperson on

Other useful Early Years Alliance Publications

Complaint Investigation Record (Early Years Alliance 2015)