



## Making a Complaint

### Policy statement

It is of paramount importance that the nursery should run smoothly and that parents and staff work together in a spirit of cooperation in the children's best interests. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our Nursery and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the Nursery. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the child's key worker, however 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 the Nursery to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

### Procedures

#### *Making a complaint*

##### Stage 1

- Any parent/carer who wishes to raise an issue regarding the Nursery should first approach the child's key person. Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

##### Stage 2

- If the matter cannot be resolved by the key person then the Nursery Manager would work with the parents/carers to resolve the issue.

##### Stage 3

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent/carer moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the chair of the Management Committee.
- In the event of a formal, written complaint from parents/carers, every effort will be made to respond quickly and appropriately. The Nursery Manager and/or Management Committee will respond within 28 days and will meet with the parents/carers to discuss the outcome.
- Complaints will be recorded and dated in the Summary Complaints Record along with any actions taken. Complaints will remain on file at the Nursery for at least three years. A copy of the complaint may be stored in the child's personal file.

#### **Stage 4**

- If the parents/carers are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they may request a meeting with the Nursery Manager and the Chair of the Management Committee. The parent/carer should have a friend or partner present if required and the Nursery Manager should have the support of the Chairperson of the Management Committee.
- 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. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Summary Complaints Record.

#### **Stage 5**

- If at the stage four meeting the parent and the Nursery cannot reach agreement, an external mediator can be invited in 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 are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the Nursery personnel (Nursery Manager and Chair of the Management Committee) and the parent/carer, 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 6**

- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent/carer, the Nursery 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 and is logged in the Summary Complaints Record.

#### ***The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and the Local social services care team***

- It is clearly understood that parents/carers have the right to approach Ofsted directly at any stage of the complaints procedure.
- Ofsted will investigate complaints that relate to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the Nursery's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
- The contact details for Ofsted are as follows:  
Ofsted helpline: 08456 404040  
Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

- These details are displayed on our Nursery's notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, the Nursery staff follow the in-depth child protection procedure and flow chart from 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006) and the guidance provided by the Pre-School Learning Alliance, Safeguarding Children publication and Child Protection Record (guidelines for safeguarding children in early years settings).
- In these cases, both the parent and Nursery are informed and the Nursery Manager works with Ofsted or the local social services care team to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

**Records**

- The Nursery is required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage three or beyond.
- A record of complaints against our Nursery and/or the children and/or the adults working in our Nursery is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Summary Complaints Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

This policy was adopted on:

31 July 2011

Date to be reviewed by:

31 August 2012

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee:

Signatory Name:

Lisa Kennedy