

## 10 Working in partnership with parents and other agencies procedures

### 10.2 Complaints procedure for parents and service users

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal complaints procedure. We take complaints seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally, in this case every attempt will be made to resolve the issue internally, through the stages of our nursery procedure.

The same procedures apply to agencies who may have a grievance or complaint.

#### **How to raise a concern or make a complaint**

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by the telephone. Concerns should be raised with either the manager or deputy. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

Complaints against nursery staff should be made, in the first instance, to the manager of the nursery. Please mark them as Private and Confidential and left via the school office

Complaints that involve or are about the manager should be addressed to the Deputy. Please mark them as Private and Confidential and left via the school office

For ease of use a template complaint form is included at the end of this procedure. You can also ask a third party organisation like Citizens Advice to help you.

#### **Resolving complaints**

At each stage in the procedure Nursery wants to resolve the complaint. In addition we may offer one or more of the following:

- an explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made.
- an undertaking to review policies in light of the complaint
- an apology

#### **Withdrawal of complaint**

If the complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

#### **Stage one**

Formal complaints must be made to the manager or deputy (if they are against the manager). This may be done in person, in writing (preferably on the Complaints Form) or by telephone.

The person dealing with the complaint will record the day it is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing/email within seven days.

Within this response, the manager/deputy will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see.

If appropriate a face to face meeting will be arranged

During the investigation the manager/deputy will:

- If necessary interview those involved in the matter and /or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- keep a written record of meetings/interviews
- at the conclusion of their investigation, the manager/deputy will provide a formal written response within 28 days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

### **Stage two**

If the parents are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation we can invite an external mediator to help settle the complaint and do a further investigation. This person should be acceptable to both parties.

During the investigation the mediator will:

- if necessary interview those involved in the matter and /or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- keep a written record of meetings/interviews
- at the conclusion of their investigation, the mediator will provide a formal written response within 28 days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

### **Next steps**

- If the complainant believes that the matter has not been resolved and there has been a breach of the EYFS requirements they are entitled to make a complaint to Ofsted. The manager will assist in any complaint investigation as well as in producing documentation that records the steps that were taken in response to the original complaint.
- The setting manager ensures that parents know they can complain to Ofsted by telephone or in writing at any time as follows:

Applications, Regulatory and Contact (ARC) Team, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD or telephone: 0300 123 1231

### **Agencies**

- If an individual from another agency wishes to make a formal complaint about a member of staff or any practice of the setting, it should be made in writing to the setting manager.
- The complaint is acknowledged in writing within 10 days of receiving it.
- The setting manager investigates the matter and meets with the individual to discuss the matter further within 28 days of the complaint being received.
- An agreement needs to be reached to resolve the matter.

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they are entitled to appeal and are referred to the

### **Ofsted complaints record**

- Legislation requires settings to keep a record of complaints and disclose these to Ofsted at inspection, or if requested by Ofsted at any other time.
- The record of complaints is a summative record only.

A record of complaints will be kept for at least 3 years.

- In all cases where a complaint is upheld a review will be undertaken by the manager/deputy to look for ways to improve practice where it is required.

This procedure is displayed on the noticeboard..

### **Further guidance**

[Complaint Investigation Record](#) (Early Years Alliance 2021)