



Safeguarding Children

Making a complaint

Policy Statement

Our setting 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 setting and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the setting.

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.

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

EYFS key themes and commitments

1.2 Inclusive practice	2.1 Respecting each other	3.2 Supporting every child	
	2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	

Procedures

Parents are made aware of the complaints policy and the pro forma we use to log complaints, via our welcome letter, this includes OFSTED contact details.

All settings are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond. This is to be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with their child's key person, and the Team Leader.

- We will take all concerns seriously, no matter if they appear trivial.
- If the issue remains unresolved, the deputy manager or manager must be contacted to investigate the matter further.
- Parents will be consulted throughout the process and informed in writing within 7 days.

Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the setting leader and the owner.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, we have a template form for recording complaints; the form may be completed with the person in charge and signed by the parent.
- These records will be available to any parent on request; confidentiality will be maintained when filling out any complaints reports.

Regulations require settings to investigate all complaints notified to them, in writing, by a parent of a child attending the setting.

- The setting stores written complaints from parents including any detailed investigation and all information relating to the investigation in a locked cabinet in the office.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the manager meets with the parent to discuss the outcome. Should a complaint be made in writing the manager will fully investigate the complaint and report back to the parent within three days.

- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the manager. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the manager should have the support of the deputy manager.
- 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 Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three meeting the parent and setting cannot reach agreement, an external mediator may be 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.
- Sure Start Support Workers are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (setting leader and owner/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 and the manager. 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.

Any complaints made against the national standards will be recorded in our complaints report and dealt with within 28 days by the manager. In this instance OFSTED will be informed.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board

- 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 the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.

To contact Ofsted with regard to a complaint

OFSTED

(Complaints, Investigation and Enforcement)

Complaints Dept,

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Telephone:

0300 123 1231

Enquiries: @ofsted.gov.uk

- These details are displayed on our setting's notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board in our local authority.

In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the manager works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

We will record

- The process we took to ensure the complaint was fully investigated, such as interviews, reviews of records.
- Who was involved in the investigation without identifying any individuals-including staff and children.
- Any referrals made to an external agency, for example local authority environmental health departments or social services.

- Any action(s) identified by us
- Actions taken by OFSTED
- Actions taken by another external agency, where we have their permission to do so.
- The outcome of our investigation, identifying any areas where we feel we could make improvement to our provision.
- If we dismiss any staff following an investigation and if so under what circumstances.
- If any member of staff is dismissed because they put a child at risk of significant harm, we may refer the individual for inclusion onto the Protection of Children Act (POCA) list.

Documentation regarding complaints is stored in a locked cabinet and held for at least three years.

Records

- A record of complaints against our setting and/or the children and/or the adults working in our setting 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.
- We encourage an open door policy where parents can discuss concerns at any time. Parents are asked to give comments regarding their child's care via a comment, complaints and compliments box in each section as well as through regular questionnaires to help us improve practice.

We will continue to monitor and review all practice to achieve and develop an effective partnership with parents and carers.

Ofsted now will publish new complaints on their website, separate from inspection reports after the investigation has been carried out and where action has been taken to meet the legal requirements of registration. Complaints will be removed from the website five years after the closure of the complaint investigation.

Emergency contact:

Lisa Lowes (Manager): 01665 510 370

Legal Framework

Every Child Matters: All

Children's Act 1989 Childcare Act 2006

ECM 2004

Un Convention on rights of child 1989

UNICEF 1989

Data Protection Act 1998

Human rights Act 1998

Freedom of information Act 2000

Computer misuse Act 1990

This policy was adapted by

All staff

Held on

April 2012

Date to be reviewed

April 2013

Signed

Name of signatory

Lisa Lowes

Role of signatory

Manager