

Safeguarding children

1.10 Making a complaint

Policy statement

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

Procedures

All settings are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage two (as below) or beyond. This is 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 pre-school's provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with a senior member of staff or committee member.
- An informal record of the complaint/concern is kept in our Complaints Log for monitoring purposes.
- 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 pre-school leader and the chair of the management committee.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, we can provide a form for this purpose and it may be completed with the person in charge and signed by the parent.
- We store written complaints from parents in our Complaints Log.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the pre-school leader meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- Parents must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the pre-school leader and the chair of the management committee. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the leader should have the support of the chairperson of the management committee present.
- 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 and will be logged.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three 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.
- We would contact our Early Years Team for advice as to who could act as a suitable mediator.

- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the pre-school personnel (pre-school leader 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.
- 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 and is logged.
- 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 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 pre-school'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 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 the Privacy Notice which is available to view on our website. The ICO can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or ico.org.uk

The number to call Ofsted with regard to a complaint is:

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 in our local authority.
- In these cases, both the parent and pre-school are informed and the pre-school 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 our pre-school is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in our Complaints Log which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

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 agreement is not reached, the complainant may write to the setting manager's line manager, who acknowledges the complaint within 5 days and reports back within 14 days.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they are entitled to appeal and are referred to the owners/directors/trustees.

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 owners/directors/trustees to look for ways to improve practice where it is required.

This procedure is displayed on Parent Notice Board.

Further guidance

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

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	<u>Cullompton Pre-School</u>	name of setting
Held on	<u>15th September 2010</u>	(date)
Date to be reviewed	<u>15th September 2011</u>	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	<u>M Ratcliff</u>	
Name of signatory	<u>Michelle Ratcliff</u>	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	<u>Chairperson</u>	

This policy has a bi-annual review period and, as such, will be reviewed and signed off at a management committee meeting of Cullompton Pre-School each year, as shown below.

Previously reviewed on:-	28 th March 2013	by	Michael Hall, Chairperson
Previously reviewed on:-	23 rd March 2015	By	Caroline Williams Chairperson
Previously reviewed on:-	21 st November 2016	by	Sarah Lush Chairperson
Previously reviewed on:-	11 th March 2019	by	Alex Fox, Chairperson

Reviewed by Staff on:	3 rd October 2022 (MW/AJ)
Reviewed by Committee on:	18.10.22
Date of next review:	October 2024
Signed on behalf of the Management Committee:	H Tilley
Name of Signatory (printed):	Hannah Tilley
Role of Signatory (e.g. Chairperson)	Chairperson