



## **Complaints Procedure/ Policy**

As a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance we aim to provide the highest quality and care for all our children. We aim to offer a welcome to each individual child and family and to provide a warm and caring environment within which all children can learn as they play.

We believe children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community generally and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our group at any time.

Many concerns can be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result we have a procedure for dealing with concerns. All complaints that reach Stage 2 or beyond are recorded in the Summary Complaints Record Book which is available to parents as well as Ofsted inspectors. Records of complaints will be kept for 3 years.

### **Making a complaint**

#### **Stage 1:**

- A parent who has a concern about any aspect of the group's provision should first of all talk over any worries and anxieties with their child's keyperson and the Manager.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

#### **Stage 2:**

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or the problem recurs, the parent moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the Manager or Chairperson of the Committee.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form available which can be completed with help from the Manager and signed by the parent.
- The Manager will store all information regarding a written complaint in a designated file, which will be kept in a locked cabinet.
- Once the investigation into the complaint is completed the Manager or the Chairperson will meet with the parent to discuss the outcome. The outcome of the investigation must be reported to the parent within 28 days.
- A copy of the complaint will be forwarded to the chair of the management committee.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage it is logged in the Complaints Summary Record Book.

**Stage 3:**

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he/she requests a meeting with the Manager and Chairperson. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required.
- An agreed written record of the discussion will be made including any decision or action to be taken 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 it is logged in the Complaints Summary Record Book.

**Stage 4:**

- If at the Stage 3 meeting the parent and setting 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.
- The mediator will keep all discussions confidential. She/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator will keep an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of the advice she/he has given.

**Stage 5:**

- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the Manager, the Chairperson and the mediator 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.
- A record of this meeting is made, including the decision on the action to be taken. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This record then signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage it is logged in the Complaints Summary Record book.

**Role of the registering authority:**

- Parents may approach Ofsted at any stage of this complaints procedure and Ofsted would be involved if a child appeared to be at risk, or where there seemed to be a possible breach of registration requirements.
- Contact details for Ofsted: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) Tel 0300 123 4666.
- These details are displayed on the notice board in the entrance hall.
- If a child appears to be at risk we will follow the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. In this case, both the parents and the setting are informed and the Manager works with Ofsted and the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at an early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interest of the pre-school and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.

The Manager and Chairperson are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the policy.

Reviewing the Complaints Procedure/Policy: The Chairperson is responsible for overseeing the annual review.

**The Lavington Pre-school Complaints Procedure/Policy will be reviewed on:**

**Date:** ..... **Signed:** .....

**Name:** ..... **Post:** .....

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