



Complaints procedure

Statement of intent

Our group believes that children and parents/carers are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our group and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the group. 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.

Aim

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

Methods

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure.

How to complain

Stage 1

- Any parent who is uneasy about an aspect of the group's provision talks over, first of all, their worries and anxieties with Helen Jones, the Manager.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the Manager and the Chairperson of the Management Committee.
- Most complaints should be able to be resolved informally at Stage 1 or at Stage 2.

Stage 3

- The parent requests a meeting with the Manager and the Chairperson of the Management Committee. Both the parent and the Manager may have a friend, partner or colleague present if required. An agreed written record of the discussion is made. 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.

Stage 4

- If at the Stage 3 meeting the parent and group 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.
- Practitioners or volunteers within the Pre-School Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussion confidential. They can hold separate meetings with the Group's personnel (Manager and Chairperson 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 they give.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the Manager and the Chairperson 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.

The role of Ofsted.

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of our registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the National Standards for Day Care are adhered to.

The address for any such complaints is:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

The telephone number of the Ofsted regional centre is: **0300 123 1231**

These details are displayed on the group's notice board.

If a child appears to be at risk, the setting follows the procedures of the Local Authority (ChECS). In these cases, both the parent and the group are informed and the Manager works with Ofsted or the ChECS to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint followed by appropriate action.

Records

A record of complaints against our group and/or the children and/or the adults working in our group 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 *Complaint Investigation Record*, which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Elworth Pre-school Group	
Held on	(date)
Date to be reviewed	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	
Name of signatory	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	