



J 11. Complaints and Concerns Procedure

We are committed to providing a safe, stimulating, consistent and accessible service to all children and all parents/carers. We always aim to provide high quality service for everyone and we believe that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt attention to their needs and wishes. We also appreciate that caring for each unique child is a **sensitive, delicate and individual** matter and 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 aim to bring all concerns about the running of our setting to a satisfactory conclusion for **all the parties involved**.

This policy constitutes our formal complaints procedure and is displayed on our premises at all times. We are required to keep a written record of any/all complaints and their outcome recorded in detail. This is also made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors on request. We have a private space available in the nursery office, kitchen area and/or we can also arrange for a more convenient time, for example in the evenings or at the weekends. We are committed to **open and regular dialogue** with parents/carers and we **welcome all comments** on our services, regardless of whether they are positive or negative.

1. We anticipate that most concerns will be taken seriously, investigated and resolved quickly **by an informal approach** to:
 - a) The appropriate member of staff. Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision in the first instance should talk over his/her concerns with the relevant staff member / your child's key teacher.
 - b) If deemed appropriate, the Manager should be approached to resolve the problem. Under normal circumstances the setting's Manager will be responsible for managing any complaints made, unless the complaint is made against the Manager and then any of the Directors will conduct an investigation.
 - c) All concerns and complaints raised will be recorded in the incident book on the Complaint Form (no confidential info here)
2. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be found or if the problem recurs then:
 - a) The parent/carer must put their concerns or complaint **in writing (by formal letter)** to the setting's Manager and the Directors of the settings. Details of relevant names, dates, evidence and any other important information on the nature of the complaint should be included.
 - b) We will acknowledge receipt of the complaint as soon as possible, within three (3) working days at least, and fully investigate the matter. If there is any delay, we will advise the parent/carer of this and offer an explanation. The Manager will be responsible for sending a full and formal response.
 - c) If the Manager has good reason to believe that the situation has child protection implications then Social Services will be contacted in accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. If any party involved in the complaint has good reason to believe that a criminal offence has been committed then the police will be contacted.



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- d) We will record all written complaints from parents/carers in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the setting's Manager may wish to record all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint but attached to the child's personal file.
 - e) When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the setting's Manager will meet with the parent/carer to discuss the outcome. The parent/carer must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint. This formal response will include details of any actions taken, or to be taken, and any amendments to the policies and procedures as a result of the investigation. This response will be sent to the parents/carers concerned and all relevant and appropriate staff.
 - f) The Manager will arrange a time to meet the parents/carers concerned and any other relevant individuals, such as members of staff, to discuss the complaint and our response to it. The Manager will judge if it is best for all parties to meet together or if individual meetings are more appropriate.
3. If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, s/he can request a meeting with the setting's **Manager and the Directors**. The parent/carer may have a friend or partner present if required and the Manager should be supported by the Director/s or another member of the management team. 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 should 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 summarised points are recorded in the appropriate file.
4. If the parties cannot reach agreement, an **external mediator** (e.g. Camden Early Years staff or Pre-school Learning Alliance staff) is invited to help settle the complaint. This mediator 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 keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting's staff and the parent/carer and keeps record of any meetings and of any advice s/he gives. A record of final meeting between parties including decision on the action to be taken is made and everyone present signs the record and receives a copy. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

Parents/Carers can **approach Ofsted directly at any stage** of this complaint's procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the setting's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted. If you wish to make a formal complaint then you can contact the Ofsted Complaints and Investigation Unit on **0300 123 1231**.

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 National Standards for Day Care are adhered to.

The address of our Ofsted regional centre is:

Ofsted,
Piccadilly Gate, Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD



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If the Manager feels that the complaint is related to a safeguarding issue the Manager will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, LSCB and ensure that the **MASH** (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) is contacted, according to the Safeguarding policy. If any party has good reason to believe that a criminal offence has been committed, then they will contact the police.

Complaints Record

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 Complaints Record sheet; these are available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request. We will ensure we keep records of complaints for at least 3 years.