

Complaints Procedure

As a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, we aim to provide the highest quality education 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 and develop as they play.

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

Making concerns known

1. A parent/carer who is uneasy about any aspect of the group's provision should first of all talk over any worries and anxieties with the pre-school leader or their child's Key Worker.
2. If this does not have a satisfactory outcome within a couple of weeks, or if the problem recurs, the parent/carer should put the concerns or complaint in writing and request a meeting with the pre-school leader and the chair of the management committee. Both parents/carer and the leader should have a friend or partner present if required, and an agreed written record of the discussion should be made.
3. Any complaints received (written, phone, e-mail or verbal) will be logged in the complaints file (ensuring anonymity is maintained). Any such complaint must be dealt with within 28 days.

Most complaints should be resolved informally or at this initial stage

1. If the matter is still not sorted out to the parent's/carer's satisfaction, the parent should again contact the chair.
2. If parent and group cannot reach agreement, it might be helpful to invite an external mediator, one who is acceptable to both parties, to listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to clarify the situation. Staff or volunteers within the Pre-school Learning Alliance will be available to act as mediator if both parties wish it.
3. The mediator will help clarify the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.
4. The mediator will keep all discussion confidential. S/he will meet with the group if requested and will keep an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice s/he has given.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (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 and telephone number of Ofsted is:

**Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD**

0300 123 1231

The registering authority would be involved if a child appeared to be at risk. See our separate Child Protection Policy for further details in this connection.

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.

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 interests of the pre-school and parents/carers that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.