

## **Complaints procedure**

### **Statement of intent**

Our setting 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 setting and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the setting. 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 setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

### **Method**

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure with a reply to the complainant within 28 days.

#### *Making a complaint*

##### Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with the setting leader.
- 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 Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the setting leader and the chair of the management committee.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints.
- The setting stores written complaints from parents in the complaints file.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the setting leader or manager meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Summary Complaints Record.

##### Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the setting leader and the chair of the management committee. The parent may 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. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Summary Complaints Record.

**Toy Box Pre-School**  
Castle Cary, Somerset

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 keeps all discussion confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (setting 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.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the setting 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.

**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 setting's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Day Care are adhered to.
- The telephone number and address of our Ofsted regional centre is:
  - 0300 123 1231
  - Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
- These details are displayed on our setting's notice board.

**Records**

- 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 Summary Complaints Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

This policy was adopted by Toy Box Pre-School	Date:
Signed on behalf of the management committee	
Name of signatory	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	