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Complaints Procedure

Policy Statement

We aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We aim to offer a warm welcome to each individual child and their family and to provide a caring environment in which they can learn and develop as they play.

We believe that children, and their parents, are entitled to expect courtesy with prompt and attention to their needs and wishes. It is our intention to work in partnership with parents and the local community and we welcome suggestions on how we can improve our Pre-school. We will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of our Pre-school and our fulfilment of the early years foundation stage (EYFS).

We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the Pre-school Manager. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns. We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our Pre-school to a satisfactory conclusion for all the parties involved.

Procedures

We are required to keep a written record ('summary log') of any complaints that reach stage 2 and above and their outcome. This is made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors on request.

Making a Complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about any aspect of the Pre-school's provision should first talk over their concerns with the Pre-school Manager.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

- If this does not result in a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem reoccurs, the parent moves to stage 2 of the procedure by putting their concerns or complaint in writing to the Pre-school Manager and to the Chair Person of the Committee. For parents who are not comfortable making written complaints, a template complaint form can be supplied that may be completed together with either of the Pre-school Manager or Chair Person and then signed by the parent.
- During any investigation, all aspects of the written complaint will be stored in an investigation file designated for the complaint and stored confidentially.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the parent will be informed of the outcome either in writing or in a meeting with the Pre-school Manager or Chair Person of the Committee.
- We will notify the parent of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the complaint's record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they should request a meeting with the Pre-school Manager and the Chair Person of the Committee. The parent may have a friend present if they so wish and the Pre-school Manager or Chair Person will have a member of the Pre-school Committee to support them. The Pre-school will have an administrator present to record the minutes of the meeting.
- An agreed written record of the meeting is made as well as a decision or action agreed as a result. All parties present at the meeting will be asked to sign the record and will receive a copy of it.
- The signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the complaints record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage 3 meeting a conclusion cannot be reached, an external mediator will be invited to help settle the complaint. This person should be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides, and offer advice. The mediator has no legal powers, but can help define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which a resolution may be achieved.
- Staff or volunteers within the Pre-school learning alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. They can hold separate meetings with the Pre-school Manager and Chair Person of the Committee and separately with the parent if this is deemed to be helpful. The mediator will keep a written record of any meetings and any advice given.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded their investigation, a final meeting will take place between the parent, the Pre-school Manager and the Chair Person of the Committee. The purpose of this meeting will be to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice will be used to reach this conclusion. The mediator can be invited to this meeting if it is deemed to be helpful.
- The Pre-school will have an administrator present to record the minutes of the meeting. Everyone present at the meeting will sign this record and receive a copy. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), local safeguarding partners and the information commissioner's office.
- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure if they believe there is a possible breach of the Pre-school's registration requirements or if we are not meeting the EYFS requirements. It is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the safeguarding and welfare requirements the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are adhered to.

Contacts

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