

Complaints Policy



Statement of intent

We believe 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 Mr Noah's and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the nursery school. 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 procedures for dealing with complaints.

Aim

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

Methods

To achieve this, we operate the following procedure for dealing with complaints against the nursery school. We will investigate all written complaints, including those relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint.

We also keep a Complaint Summary Log of all complaints received, action taken and the outcomes. When completing this record we will bear in mind the need for appropriate confidentiality.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any person, parent or other, who has a concern about an aspect of the nursery school's provision should first discuss worries and anxieties with the Director / child's key person.
- Most concerns will be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the person/parent moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the Director.
- For persons who are not comfortable with making written complaints, they may ask for help from the Director.
- The nursery school stores written complaints from parents in the child's personal file. If the complaint involves a detailed investigation, however, the Director may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint. All other complaints will be stored in a separate file.
- The nursery school will investigate all written complaints and will record the process that was taken to ensure the complaint was fully investigated; eg interviews, reviews of records, who was involved in the investigation without identifying any individuals named in the complaint including staff or any child, any referrals made to an external agency, e.g., local authority environmental health department or social services.
- The Complaints Summary Log record sheet should be used to summarise this, with appropriate attachments.
- Details of the outcome of the investigation will include, any action(s) identified by the nursery school; any action required or taken by OFSTED; any action taken by another external agency, where permission to do so has been given; the outcome of the investigation, identifying any areas where it is felt improvements to the setting could be made; if a member of staff was dismissed following the investigation (and under what circumstances) [if this was due to the fact they placed a child at risk of significant harm, they may need to be referred onto the Protection of Children Act list – advice can be sought from OFSTED].
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Director meets with the complainant to discuss the outcome. A separate letter to the person/parent who made the complaint giving more detail may also be issued, if requested or we think it is appropriate.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Log.

Stage 3

- If the person/parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she may request a meeting with the Director. They should have a friend or partner present if required and the Director should have an advocate present.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All 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 Complaints Summary Log.

Stage 4

- If at the Stage 3 meeting the person/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. He or she can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (Director and advocate) and the parent, if this is deemed to be helpful. The Mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice given.

Stage 5

- When the Mediator has concluded investigations, a final meeting between the person/parent, the Director and advocate will be 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.
- Parents may approach OFSTED directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the nursery school's registration requirements, it is essential to involve OFSTED as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements are adhered to.
- The address and telephone number of our OFSTED regional centre are:
OFSTED Early Years, 1 Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD. Tel. No. 0300 123 1231
- These details are displayed on our notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Kent Safeguarding Children's Board.
- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the Director works with OFSTED or the Kent Safeguarding Children's Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Records

- A record of complaints against the nursery school and/or the children and/or the adults working at Mr Noah's is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed and the outcome.
- This information is recorded in the Complaints Summary Log (using a Complaints Summary Log record sheet) which is available for any parent, staff or committee member to view.
- We will keep the record of concerns and complaints for three years, or until the next OFSTED inspection since the complaint, whichever is the longer time.
- We must provide OFSTED, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint.

This policy was adopted:

2/9/2020

Signed:

Role of signatory

Director

Date policy to be reviewed not later than

March 2022