



1.15 Complaints policy

- Policy Statement
- Procedures
 - Making a complaint
 - Stage 1
 - Stage 2
 - Stage 3
 - Stage 4
 - Stage 5
 - The role of Ofsted and LSCP
 - Records



Making a complaint

Policy statement

Our complaints policy is issued to all families as part of the registration process. It is also available upon request from the manager.

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

Procedures

We are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond. This is to be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors.

Early Education entitlement

- Where parents/carers are not satisfied that their child is receiving the free entitlement in the correct way (as set out in the settings funding agreement, and in Early Education and Childcare Statutory guidance for local authorities), a complaint can be submitted directly to either **Becky Girling** (manager) or **Sarah Flower** (Chair of the committee).

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks over their concerns with the Manager.
- 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 this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the setting manager and the chair of the management committee.
- The setting stores written complaints from parents in the complaints file.

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- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the setting manager meets with the parent to discuss the outcome
- Parents must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they request a meeting with the Manager and the chair of the management committee. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the Manager 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 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 Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three 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.
- Staff or volunteers within the Early Years Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. They can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (setting manager 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 they give.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the setting manager and 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



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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 Partnership

- Parents may 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 as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
- The number to call Ofsted regarding a complaint is: 03001231231
- These details are displayed on our setting's notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed, and the setting leader works with Ofsted or Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.
 - If a parent has a concern or complaint about the use of their child's Early Education Entitlement funding, by the setting, they should contact the Norfolk Family Information Service (FIS) on 0344 800 8020 or via e-mail: fis@norfolk.gov.uk

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.