



Complaints Policy

Policy Statement

Neston Pre-School Playgroup 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 the setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

PROCEDURES

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure. All settings are required to keep a written record of any complaints that reach stage 2 and above and their outcome. This is to be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors on request. A full procedure is set out in the Pre-School Learning Alliance Publication Complaint Investigation Record (2012), which acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose.

1. Making a complaint

Stage 1

- i) Any parent or carer who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks over, first of all, his / her concerns with the setting leader.
- ii) Most complaints will hopefully be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

- i) If Stage 1 does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent or carer moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the setting leader and / or chair of the management committee.
- ii) For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints in the Complaint Investigation Record: the form may be completed with the person in charge and signed by the parent. *See Appendix 1 for a copy of this form (or it available to view in the setting)*
- iii) The Pre-school stores written complaints from parents in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the setting leader may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.
- iv) When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the setting leader or manager meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- v) Parents must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.
- vi) When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Investigation Record.

Stage 3

- i) If the parent or carer 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, or the senior manager, present.
- ii) If all parties agree, a 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 & receive a copy of it.
- iii) 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

- i) If at the stage 3 meeting the parent or carer 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 to resolve it.

- ii) Staff or volunteers within the Pre-School Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- iii) 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

- i) When the mediator has concluded his/her investigations, a final meeting between the parent or carer, 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.
- ii) 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.

2. The Role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

2.1 Parents or carers 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 Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.

2.2 The address and telephone number to contact with regard to a complaint is:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Tel: 0300 123 1231

2.3 The Ofsted Parents Poster is displayed at the setting with the above details.

2.4 If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board in our local authority – please see information displayed in the foyer and / or speak to our designated safeguarding officer.

2.5 In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the setting leader works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

3. Records

3.1 A record of complaints in relation to 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.

3.2 The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Summary Investigation Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

This policy was formulated in consultation with staff and the Management Committee of Neston Pre-school Playgroup and was formally adopted at a committee meeting held on 23 / 1 / 2017

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Print Name Laura Lloyd

Role of Signatory Chair

Date to be reviewed January 2018