

## SECTION 1

### General Welfare Requirement: Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare

Children's behaviour must be managed effectively and in a manner appropriate for their stage of development and particular individual needs.

## Safeguarding Children

### Making a complaint

#### Policy Statement

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 of the parties involved.

#### EYFS key themes and commitments

1.2 Inclusive practice	2.1 Respecting each other	3.2 Supporting every child	
	2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	

## Procedures

All settings 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. A full procedure is set out in the Pre-school Learning Alliance publication *Summary Complaints Record* which acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose.

### *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 this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the setting leader and the owner or chair of the management committee.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints in the above-mentioned publication; the form may be completed with the person in charge and signed by the parent.
- The setting 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.
- 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 Complaints Summary 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 owner/chair of the management committee. The

parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the leader should have the support of the chairperson of the management committee, or the proprietor/senior manager, 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 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 Pre-school Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (setting leader and owner/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 owner/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.



## **Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications**

- Summary Complaints Record (2006)