

Making a complaint

Children and parents/carers will be treated with respect at all times. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly, by an informal approach with the appropriate member of staff. If a concern or complaint is not resolved, we have a set of procedures in order to come to a satisfactory conclusion for all parties involved.

This is a staged procedure and if at any stage the parent/carer does not feel that the concern or complaint has been resolved they should move to the next stage.

Stage 1

Any parent/carer who has a concern are encouraged to discuss these with one of our managers. Most concerns and complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage. We will record the issue and how it was resolved.

Stage 2

The concern or complaint at this stage needs to be put in writing to the managers including names, dates and any other relevant information. There is a template form to use at the end of this policy if required. The setting will acknowledge receipt of the written complaint as soon as possible and will investigate and notify parents of outcome within 28 days. The parent/carer will receive a full and formal response which will be copied to all relevant members of staff if appropriate. This will include any actions and changes to policy emerging from the investigation.

Stage 3

The parent/carer should request a meeting with one/both of the managers and the Chair of the Committee. The parent/carer may have a friend or partner present if they prefer. An agreed written record of the discussion will be made, including any decision or action that will be taken as a result. All of the parties present at the meeting will sign the record and receive a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

Stage 4

The setting will invite an external mediator 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 us to define the problem, review the actions so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved. The mediator will keep all discussions confidential and may hold separate

meetings with staff and the parent/carer, if this is decided to be helpful. When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between the parent/carer, our managers and Chair of the Committee will be held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint and the mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator may be 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, will be made and everyone present at the meeting will sign the record and receive a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

Record keeping for all stages

All records will be kept in our complaints folder.

Ofsted

Parents/carers may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaint's procedure.

In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the settings 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.

Contacting Ofsted:

Address: Ofsted National Business Unit, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester. M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

These details are displayed on the Melbourn Playgroup and Out of School parents and carers notice board.