



Making a Complaint

Policy Statement

Goudhurst Village Pre-school believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. It welcomes suggestions on how to improve the pre-school and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the pre-school. It anticipates 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, it has a set of procedures for dealing with concerns.

The pre-school aims to bring all concerns about the running of the setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

Procedures

To achieve this, the Pre-school operates the following complaints procedure.

All pre-schools are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage 2 and above, and their outcomes. 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 'Complaints Summary Record (2012)'. This publication acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose. Ofsted will be notified of any allegations being made within 14 days.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the pre-school's provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with the **Pre-school Manager, Jo Galloway**.
- 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 **Pre-school Manager, Jo Galloway and the Trustees**.
- If parents are not comfortable with making a written complaint, a form for recording complaints can be completed by the person in charge and signed by the parent.

- The pre-school stores written complaints from parents in the child's personal file and in the summary log of complaints. If the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the Pre-school Manager may wish to store the detailed information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Pre-school Manager and the Trustee meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the main points are logged in the Complaint Investigation Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Pre-school Manager and the chair of the Trustees. The parent may have a friend or partner present if they wish and the Manager should have the support of one of the Trustees.
- 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 main points are logged in the Complaint Investigation Record.

Stage 4

- If at the Stage 3 meeting the parent and pre-school 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 discussion confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the pre-school personnel (Pre-school Manager and the Trustees) 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 Pre-school Manager and Chair of the Trustees 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.

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

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the pre-school'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.
- The telephone number for Ofsted is 03001234666, details are also available online. Ofsted details are displayed on our pre-school's notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, the pre-school follows the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- In these cases, both the parent and pre-school are informed and the Pre-school Manager works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Records

- A record of complaints against the pre-school and/or the children and/or the adults working in our pre-school is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the outcome of all complaints is recorded in the complaints summary log which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Goudhurst Village Pre-school

Held on.....

Date to be reviewed.....

Signed on behalf of the provider.....

Name of signatory.....

Role of signatory.....