

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

## Statement of Intent

Our Pre-school 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 Pre-school and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the Pre-school. 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.

## Aim

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

## Methods

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure.

### *How to complain*

#### Stage 1

- Any parent who is uneasy about an aspect of the Pre-school's provision initially discusses his/her worries/anxieties or concerns, with the Pre-school Leader.

#### Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the Pre-school Leader and the Chair of the Management Committee. There will be a written response from the Pre-school Leader and the Chair of the Management Committee within 28 days.
- Most complaints should be able to be resolved informally at Stage 1 or at Stage 2.

#### Stage 3

- The parent requests a meeting with the Pre-school Leader and the Chair of the Management Committee. Both the parent and the Leader may have a friend or partner present, if requested. An agreed written record of the discussion is made. 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.

#### 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 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

- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the Pre-school 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.
- 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 Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children's Board (BSCB).**

Please see our Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of our registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, are adhered to.

The email address of Ofsted is: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/childcare](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/childcare)

Address: Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

If a child appears to be at risk, our Pre-school follows the procedures of the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children's Board (BSCB) in our local authority.

In these cases, both the parent and Pre-school are informed and the Pre-school Leader (Tina Horler) works with Ofsted and/or the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding

Children’s Board (BSCB) to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint followed by appropriate action.

If an allegation is made against a member of the Staff or Committee we follow the guidance of the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children’s Board (BSCB) when investigating any complaints. The relevant agencies will be informed ie. Safeguarding in Education, Social Care, Child Protection & Sexual Crime Unit (police) and Ofsted. Our Designated Officer for dealing with complaints is the Chairperson on the Committee.

**Records**

A record of complaints against our Pre-school and/or the children and/or the adults working in our Pre-school is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed. All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know any information is shared under the guidance of the BSCB. All records are kept for 3 years.

This policy was agreed and adopted at a Committee Meeting held on	
Signed .....	For and on behalf of Marlow Bottom Pre-school CIO

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