



Complaints Policy

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

Providers must put in place a written procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents and/or carers.

Policy Statement

Whitchurch Pre-School strongly 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.

Procedures

At Whitchurch Pre-School, we keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond. This is to be made available to parents, subject to confidentiality, as well as to Ofsted inspectors. All complaints are recorded and stored in the complaints folder.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of our provision talks over their concerns with the Manager Marie Winnett. We also have a box where comments, suggestions and complaints can be left securely and anonymously if preferred. Most complaints will 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 Manager and/or the trustees.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Manager will meet with the parents to discuss the outcome if required.
- Parents will be informed of the outcome of the investigation at the earliest opportunity, and at most, within 28 days of making the complaint
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they may request a meeting with the Manager and a nominated trustee. The parent may have a friend/partner present if required, and the Manager should have the support of the trustee(s), or another suitable person, 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 Record.

Stage 4

- If there is still no agreement at the stage three meeting, an external mediator may be 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.

- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. They may hold separate meetings with the preschool staff/trustees and the parent, if deemed helpful. The mediator will keep an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice given.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between the parent and Whitchurch Pre-School 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 Ofsted and Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of the 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, Ofsted has a duty to ensure the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.

The number to call Ofsted with regard to a complaint is: 0300 1234 234, or you can email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk. Their address is Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD. These details are displayed on our setting's notice board.

If a child appears to be at risk, Whitchurch Pre-School will follow the procedures set by government guidance including 'Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018', working with the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership, and within our own Safeguarding Children Policies. In these cases, parents will be informed as appropriate, and the Manager and staff team will work with Ofsted and Pan-Dorset and other professionals as appropriate, to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate and timely action.

Records

- A full and complete record of complaints against Whitchurch Pre-School is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaints Record, which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

Covid-19

It has become necessary during the Covid-19 pandemic to change many aspects of the pre-school from our admissions policy, the resources we use, and our interaction with parents. All of these changes are fully explained and outlined in our Covid-19 Policy, and our reasoning behind this, outlined in our Covid-19 Risk Assessment. In the event of a complaint at this time, our complaints policy will be followed in full, however, the Manager will respectfully remind parents if the complaint is about something outside of our control. It may be necessary for meetings with parents, trustees, mediators etc to take place virtually or by telephone.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Children Policies and the Confidentially Policy and Procedures.

This policy is reviewed annually, or as deemed necessary.

Policy reviewed and updated 18th May 2021

Signed Helen Roberts