



## **Complaints Policy**

**Pre-school Manager: Nicky Benson-Dare**

**This policy will be reviewed annually. It will also be revised following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance and procedures.**

## Statement

St. Peter's Busy Bees Pre School believes that children and parents/carers 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 setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

## Procedures

We 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 pre-school's provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with the manager.
- 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 reoccurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the manager and the chair of the 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 manager and signed by the parent.
- The pre-school stores written complaints from parents/carers in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the pre-school 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 manager meets with the parent/carers to discuss the outcome.
- Parents/carers must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

### Stage 3

- If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the manager and the chair of the committee. The parent/carer should have a friend or partner present if required and the manager should have the support of the chairperson of the committee.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to be taken as a result. All 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 an 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 a resolution might be reached.
- 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. He/she can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (manager and committee chair) and the parent, if it is decided that this would be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice he/she gives.

### Stage 5

When the mediator has concluded his/her investigations, a final meeting between the parent/carer, the manager and the chair of the 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 is made of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

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 Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.

The number to call Ofsted with regard to a complaint is:

0300123-1231      Details are displayed on our setting's notice board.

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If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board in our local authority.

In these cases, both the parent and pre-school are informed and the manager works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint is carried out and followed by appropriate action.

#### Records

- A record of complaints against our setting and/or the children and/or the adults working in our setting 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 Summary Complaints Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.