

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, and must keep a written record of any complaints, and their outcome.



Corfe Castle Pre-School and Kids Club Complaints Policy

Policy statement

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

Procedures

All Pre-Schools are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage 2 or beyond. This is to be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors. Ours is kept in Operations File 2, in the "Records" section.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the Pre-School's provision talks over, initially, their concerns with the Pre-School Leader/Administration Manager.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- Record the issue, and how it was resolved, in the child's file.

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 Leader/Administration Manager and the Chair of the Parent's Management Committee.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints in Operations File 2 in the "Forms" section; the form may be completed with the Pre-School Leader/Administration Manager and signed by the parent.
- The Pre-School stores written complaints from parents in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the Pre-School Leader/Administration Manager 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 Pre-School Leader/Administration Manager meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- Parents 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 Investigation Record Book.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they can request a meeting with the Pre-School Leader or Administration Manager and the Chair of the Parent's Management Committee. The parent may have a friend or partner present if required and the Pre-School Leader/Administration Manager should have the support of the Chair of the Parent's Management Committee.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take 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 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 discussions confidential. They can hold separate meetings with the Pre-School personnel (Pre-School Leader/Administration Manager and Chair of the Parent's 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 they give.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the Pre-School Leader/Administration Manager and Chair of the Parent's 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, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of the complaint’s 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 contact details for Ofsted about a complaint is:

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

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

- These details are displayed on our Pre-School’s notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our Pre-School 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 Pre-School Leader/Administration Manager works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.
- The Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) can be contacted if you have made a complaint about the way your data is being handled and remain dissatisfied after raising your concern with us. For further information about how we handle your data, please refer to the Privacy Notice given to you when you registered your child at [our/my] setting. The ICO can be contacted at Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or ico.org.uk

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.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Summary Complaint Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.