

# Complainants Policy

At Serendipity Day Nursery we believe that parents/carers are entitled to express any concerns or anxieties they may have on the running of the setting. We welcome any suggestions on how to improve the setting. Our complainant's procedure lets the parents/carer know that any complainants made will be treated in a professional manner and immediate action will be taken as necessary. The wellbeing of the child will remain our prime consideration throughout.

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

## Methods:

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure.

### *Making a complaint*

#### Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks over, first of all, his/her worries and anxieties with the child's Key Worker. 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/carer moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the setting leader. The setting stores written complaints from parents (and specific to their child) in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the setting 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 setting leader meets with the parent to discuss the outcome. A written response is recorded and shared with the parent within 20 days. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Log.

#### Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the setting leader. The parent can have a friend or partner present if required and the leader should have the support of the Manager 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 Log.

#### Stage 4

- If at the Stage 3 meeting the parent and setting 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 within Devon County Council's Children and Young Peoples Services are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussion confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel 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 and the key worker 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):

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this 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 with a duty to ensure the Welfare Requirements for Day Care are adhered to.

- The Ofsted complaints investigation and enforcement team number is 03001231231, their address is; National Business Unit, Piccadilly Gate, Fore Street, Manchester, M12 WD website [www.ofsted.gov](http://www.ofsted.gov)
- Both the parent and setting are informed and the setting leader works with Ofsted to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

**Records:**

- Records of all complaints, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed, must be retained for three years from when the record was made. The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaints Log which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

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