



Complaints Procedure

Statement of Intent

Our setting 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.

Aim

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

Methods

It is the Playgroup's legal responsibility to investigate any written complaint and respond to it within 28 days.

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure. All settings are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage 2 or beyond.

Stage 1

1. Any carer who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks over, first of all, his/her worries and anxieties with the Playgroup Manager.
2. Most complaints should be resolved amicable and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

1. If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the carer moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the Playgroup Manager and the Chair of the Management Committee.
2. For carers 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 Playgroup Manager and signed by the carer.
3. A member of staff or committee member is assigned as owner of the complaint and starts a Complaints Summary Record form. They also log the complaint in the Complaint Summary Log.
4. The setting stores written complaints from carers in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the Playgroup



Manager may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.

5. When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Playgroup Manager or Chair of the Management Committee meets with the carer to discuss the outcome.
6. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record form.

Stage 3

1. If the carer is not satisfied with the outcomes of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Playgroup Manager and the Chair of the Management Committee. The carer should have a friend or partner present if required and the Playgroup Manager should have the support of the Chair of the Management Committee, present.
2. 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.
3. 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 form.

Stage 4

1. If at the Stage 3 meeting the carer 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.
2. Staff or volunteers within the Pre-school Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
3. The mediator keeps all discussion confidential. He/She can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (Playgroup Manager and Chair of the Management Committee) and the carer, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice he/she gives.

Stage 5

1. When the mediator has concluded his/her investigations, a final meeting between the carer, the Playgroup Manager 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.
2. 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 Local Safeguarding Board

Carers 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 an inspection body with a duty to ensure the EYFS is adhered to.

The Ofsted telephone number is 0300 1231231.

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

In these cases, both the carer and setting are informed and the Playgroup Manager works with Ofsted or the Area Safeguarding Children Committee to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Records

The Playgroup maintains a Complaints Summary Log which is where 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 each individual complaint is recorded in a Complaints Summary Record form which is available for carers and Ofsted inspectors on request. It is a legal requirement of the setting that all records on complaints will be kept for 10 years.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	St. Augustine's Playgroup
Held on (date)	
Signed on behalf of the Management Committee/Proprietor	
Role of signatory (e.g. chairperson)	

