

HARPOLE PRE-SCHOOL

"Kind Hands, Kind Hearts, Fun Learning"

7.8 Making a complaint
Policy & Procedure

Harpole Preschool has adopted the Preschool Learning Alliance (PLA) policy Making a Complaint. The PLA ensure that their policies adhere to statutory guidance and legislative procedure and they provide the preschool with any updates. All policies and procedures are ratified by the Preschool Trustees on a rolling programme. The preschool staff, led by Sharon Matthews, ensure that their practice is in line with the policies and procedures outlined in the PLA guidance.

Policy statement

Our setting believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their issue/s. 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.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent/carer who has an issue about an aspect of the setting's provision can talk over at first their concerns with the Room Leader.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- We record the issue and how it was resolved, in the childs file.

Stage 2

- If Stage 1 does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the issue/s recurs, the parent/carer moves to this stage of the procedure by putting their issue/s in writing to the Preschool Manager.

- The Preschool Manager or Business Manager will then formally investigate the issue. When the investigation into the issue is completed, the Preschool Manager or Business Manager will report back to the parent/carer.
- In the event of a complaint concerning a manager or a Trustee the committee may delegate the investigation to another member of staff and/or an Officer of the committee to investigate.
- Our setting stores all information relating to written complaints from parents in the childs personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, our manager or business manager may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.
- Parents/Carers must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of raising the issue.
- When the issue is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record, which is made available to Ofsted on request.

Stage 3

- If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Business Manager and the representative from the Board of Trustees. The parent/carer may have a friend or partner present if they prefer and our manager should have the support of the committee.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made, by a Trustee, 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 and both parties are satisfied with the outcome. When the issue is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If after stage three the parent/carer and setting do not reach an agreement, an external mediator is invited in to help to settle the issue. This person should be acceptable to both parties and will listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator will review the action so far and suggest alternative ways in which the issue may be resolved.
- Members within the Pre-school Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.

- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. She/he can hold separate meetings with all relevant parties, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice she/he gives.
- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent/carer, the setting Pre-School Manager or Business Manager and Trustee from the Board. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the issue. The mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator is present at all meetings.
- 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.

This decision will be seen as final by the setting.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Information Commissioner's Office

- Parents/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 and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
- Parents/carers can complain to Ofsted, either by writing to:
  Ofsted National Business Unit
  Piccadilly Gate
  Store Street
  Manchester M1 2WD or telephoning 0300 123 1231
- Ofsted's Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement (CIE) team considers the complaint to ascertain what further action needs to be taken.
- 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/carer and setting are informed and the setting Supervisor 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 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 issues are stored securely, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed for at least three years.
- The outcome of all issues are recorded in the Summary Complaints Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

Funding

- If parents/carers have concerns about the way in which their Early Education and Childcare Funded hours are being delivered, they should contact West Northamptonshire Council Funding Team – EECFunding.NCC@westnorthants.gov.uk
- If parents/carers are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been dealt with they can contact the Home - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	*Harpole Pre-school*	
Held on	_____	(date)
Date to be reviewed	_____	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	_____	
Name of signatory	_____	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	_____	

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Complaint Investigation Record (2015)