

Watery Lane Preschool

Complaints Policy



Policy statement

At Watery Lane Preschool we believe that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. It is our intention to work with parents and the community generally and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our provision. A Suggestions/Concerns Box is kept available in the foyer for confidential comments, which may be anonymous. The box is checked weekly. We will give immediate 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. All complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.

Procedures

As required we will keep a written record of any complaints that reach stage two and above, and their outcome. This is to be made available to parents, as well as to Ofsted inspectors on request.

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 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 recurs, 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 which is available on request; the form may be completed with the person in charge and signed by the parent.
- The setting stores written complaints from parents in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the 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 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 Complaint Investigation Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Manager and the Chair. The parent may have a friend or partner present if they prefer and the Manager should have the support of the Committee.
- 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 Complaint Investigation Record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three 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.
- The Business Support Team at Somerset County Council or staff or volunteers within the Early Years Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (Manager and Chair) 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, the Manager and the Chair 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 Partnership and the Information Commissioner's Office.

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

- The number to call Ofsted with regard to a complaint is: **0300 123 1231** or write to:
Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD. Please see the poster on the foyer Notice-board.
- These details are displayed on our notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership. In these cases, both the parent and preschool are informed and the Manager and Chair work with Ofsted or Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership 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
- A record of any complaints will be kept for at least 3 years and until cleared for disposal by Ofsted.

Links to other policies and legislation

- Please see our policies on Children’s Rights and Entitlements and Parental Involvement.
- GDPR – May 2018

A unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling environments	Learning and development
1.2 Inclusive Practice	2.1 Respecting Each Other 2.2 Parents as Partners	3.4 The Wider Context	

This policy was adopted at a meeting of **Watery Lane Preschool**

Held on _____

Signed on behalf of Management Committee _____

Name of signatory _____ Role of signatory _____

Date to be reviewed _____