

# WHITLEY LODGE UNDER FIVES

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### Statement of intent

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.

### Legislation and references

Statutory framework for the EYFS 2021

Safeguarding Children Policy (including allegations of abuse)

### Aim

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

### Methods

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure.

#### *How to complain*

##### Stage 1

- Any parent who is uneasy about an aspect of the pre-school's provision talks over, first of all, his/her worries and anxieties with the pre-school Leader/Manager. There will be a written record of any complaints and their outcome.

##### Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the pre-school Manager and the chair of the management committee.
- Most complaints should be able to be resolved informally at Stage 1 or at Stage 2.
- There will be a written record of any complaints and their outcome.

##### Stage 3

- The parent requests a meeting with the pre-school Manager and the chair of the management committee. Both the parent and the Manager should have a friend or partner present if required. An agreed written record of the discussion is made. 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.

##### Stage 4

- If at the Stage 3 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 discussion confidential. She/he can hold separate meetings with the pre-school personnel (pre-school Manager and chair of the 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 s/he gives.

##### Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the pre-school 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.
- 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.

If a parent or carer makes a formal written complaint we will inform them of the outcome and any action we have taken or plan to take within 28 days.

**The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Area Child Protection Committee.**

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of our registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the EYFS legal requirements are adhered to.

The address and telephone number of our Ofsted regional centre are:

The National Business Unit  
Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

These details are displayed in the cloakroom.

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 Manager works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint followed by appropriate action.

**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 record of complaint will be kept for at least 3 years.

This policy was read and understood by all staff.

Carol Shields.....  
Joanne Cameron.....  
Helen Graham-Potts.....  
Jayne Pronk.....  
Amy Kennedy.....

Staff meeting date – 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023

To be revised September 2024