



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

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Date agreed with staff	
Date agreed at Committee	
Signed on behalf of Committee	
Print name & date	
Frequency of policy review	Annual
Date next review due	September 2010

Document Version Control

Issue Number	Issue Date	Summary of changes
1.0	July 2009	Checked against PSLA guidelines
1.1	September 2009	Changes to make clear who should be involved in each stage of complaint
1.2	September 2009	Small change to wording under stage 2 for clarification

Complaints Procedure

Lydiard Millicent 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 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.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.2 Inclusive practice	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.2 Supporting every child 3.4 The wider context	

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision should first of all talk over their concerns with the pre-school supervisor.
- 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 should put the concerns or complaint in writing to the pre school supervisor and give a copy of the letter to the chair of the committee.
- If the complaint is about the pre-school supervisor, then the Chair will deal with it. If the complaint involves the Chair, then the Vice Chair or another officer member of the committee will deal with it. The same process, detailed below, should be followed.
- Written complaints from parents are filed in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the pre school supervisor 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 pre-school supervisor (or Chair if they have been dealing with the complaint) 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 summary is logged in the Complaints Summary Record. The supervisor should also advise the Chair that the complaint has been resolved.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she should request a meeting with the pre school supervisor and the committee chair. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the supervisor should have the support of the committee chair or the proprietor present. Depending on the context of the complaint, it may be prudent for the chair to talk to both the parent and the staff member separately and then arrange the meeting with all parties to resolve the situation.
- 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 Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three 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 or Wiltshire Council are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the pre school 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, the pre school supervisor and the owner/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.

The role of 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 that the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
- These details of how to contact Ofsted are displayed on the pre school notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, we follow our Safeguarding Children Policy
- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the setting leader 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 the pre school and/or the children and/or the adults working in the pre school is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- All settings are required to keep a summary log of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond. This is made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors.