

Complaints Procedure

Statement of intent

At Cottage Pre-school we believe 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.

Aim We aim to bring all concerns about the running of the setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved. To achieve this we operate the following complaints procedure.

Stage 1. Any parent / carer who has a concern about an aspect of the pre-school provision, should talk over their concerns with the Manager. Most concerns should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2. If stage 1 does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent must move on to stage 2, by putting the complaint in writing to the Supervisor.

- If the complaint is about the Manager then the Trustees will deal with it. If the complaint involves a trustee then the other trustees and the Manager will deal with the complaint. The same process, detailed below should be followed.
- The Pre-school stores written complaints from parents in a designated complaints folder (and in a separate file if being dealt with by the trustees)
- Parents/carers must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.

Stage 3. If the parent/carers is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he/she should request a meeting with the Manager and the trustees. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required.

- 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 must 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 folder.

Stage 4. If at the stage 3 meeting the parent/carer and pre-school cannot reach agreement and external mediator is invited to help 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 mediator keeps all discussions confidential and can hold separate meetings with pre-school Manager, trustees 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 they give.

Stage 5. When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between all parties 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 reach a decision. A record of this meeting, including the decision, 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.

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at an early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interests of the pre-school and parents that complaints should be

taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.

The Pre-School welcome any comments as this enables discussion and improvement of the facilities and practices.