

COMPLAINTS POLICY

play-to-learn

MONTESSORI NURSERIES AND PRE-SCHOOLS



Statement of Intent

Whilst aiming to achieve the highest standard of care and education for children attending the pre-school and to foster a positive partnership with families, we recognise that on occasion circumstances may lead to a parent/carer wishing to make either a formal or informal complaint. We believe that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes and welcome suggestions on how to improve our setting, giving prompt and serious attention to any concerns raised by parents. 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 or complaints.

We will respond to all concerns or complaints within 28 days of receiving notification of an issue, using the same method of communication as the complainant – either verbal, email or written.

We use the following guidance to support our policy [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#) and [Early years: Ofsted compliance handbook](#)

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

The outcome of all complaints is held in the Summary Complaints Record file and is available for Parents and Ofsted inspectors upon request.

Updated: Feb 09, Mar 10, Oct 13, Jan 16, July 19, Nov 2021

Next Annual review date: September 2022

Method

We operate the following complaints procedure, keeping a 'Summary Log' of all complaints that reach stage 2 or beyond. This is to be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors upon request. A full procedure is set out in the 'Complaints Summary Record' and acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about any aspect of the setting's provision should discuss the issue with the Manager.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

- If there is not a satisfactory outcome at Stage 1, or if the problem recurs, the parent can move to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the Manager and the Business Owner.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, we can provide a template form for recording complaints; the form may be completed with the Manager and signed by the parent.
- The pre-school stores written complaints from parents in the Complaints 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 solely for this complaint.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Manager and Business Owner meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she can request a meeting with the Manager and the Business Owner. The parent can have a friend or partner present if required and the Manager should have the support of the Business Owner or other Senior management, present.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All 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 3 meeting the parent and pre-school cannot reach agreement, an external mediator can be 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 who are deemed as appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussion confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (setting leader and owner/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 Manager and the Business Owner 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, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted).

At any stage of the process, parents/carers are within their rights to approach Ofsted directly. Ofsted's Complaints & Enforcement Team can be contacted by phone or in writing

[Poster for parents about Ofsted's role in regulating childcare](#)

These details are displayed on our pre-school notice board/reception area.

Safeguarding Children – please see our Child Protection policy

- If a child appears to be at risk, our pre-school follows the procedures of our Child protection policy and the Local Authority Safeguarding Children Board. [Home \(escb.co.uk\)](http://escb.co.uk)
- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed, and the Manager works with Ofsted or the Local Authority Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Duties as an Employer and Employee

- Employers have a duty of care to their employees and should ensure that they provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation, providing the employee with a named contact if they are suspended.
- It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer in the nursery is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

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 outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaints Summary Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

