

Complaints Policy and Procedure

The aim of the policy

We are committed to providing an excellent service to children and their families, but in the unlikely event that you may have a concern about anything that we do, this policy provides clear guidelines for you to follow. The welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS, 2024) requires early years providers to put in place written procedures for dealing with complaints from parents, provide parents with the complaints procedure and details for Ofsted, with an explanation that parents can make a complaint to Ofsted if they wish, and keep a written record of complaints and their outcome.

Complaints Procedure

Verbal complaints:

The complaint or concern should be raised verbally with a member of the management team of the setting. Most informal complaints involve issues where there is no risk to children or where staff behaviour does not constitute misconduct. Where this is the case the process of 'resolution through dialogue' will be used. In this case there is no need to complete a formal record of complaint.

Written complaints:

The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing and will be advised to fill out a complaints form. The settings management team will also be informed of all formal complaints.

A person making a complaint may refer the matter to Ofsted if they are dissatisfied with the way in which the complaint was handled by a setting, or the complaint is serious or suggests a breach of the EYFS welfare requirements and/or learning and development requirements. A parent, or other individual, making a complaint to Ofsted about a provider may and can do anonymously if they wish.

For safeguarding allegations against staff or the manager, the setting's Designated Safeguarding Lead will report the allegation to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to inform them of the allegation and to seek advice on how to move forward with the investigation. This may include other agencies if it is not deemed appropriate for the setting to carry out the investigation.

The setting must also inform Ofsted as soon as it is reasonably practicable or in any case within 14 days. Failure to comply with this procedure is an offence.

For all complaints that relate to child protection please refer to the setting's safeguarding policy and the setting's whistle blowing policy.

Investigation of Complaints

All written complaints must be investigated and the complainant must be notified of the outcome within 28 days of having received the complaint. This includes written complaints made by email.

The complainant will be provided with the following details;

- The process that was taken to ensure that the complaint was fully investigated, such as interviews, reviews of records.
- Who was involved in the investigation without identifying any individuals named in the complaint including staff or any children and any referrals that were made to external agencies for example, the local authority, social care or Ofsted.

Details of the outcome of the investigation that took place will be recorded. This includes;

- Any actions identified by the setting,
- Any actions taken by Ofsted,
- Any action taken by another external agency, where the setting has their permission to do so,
- The outcome of the investigation, identifying areas for improvement within the provision, if the setting has dismissed any member of staff following the investigation, and if so, under what circumstances,

- If the setting has dismissed a member of staff for misconduct because they placed a child under significant harm the setting will inform the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

Recording and Storing Complaints

Providers must provide Ofsted, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint. The record of complaints should be kept for at least three years.

All complaints made by parents will be kept in a complaints file. The setting has a complaint summary record to accompany the complaints form. This can also be used to log staff complaints. Any serious complaints will be kept in a locked filing cabinet to ensure confidentiality.

Confidentiality

The complaints form will not name the complainant or any children to ensure confidentiality. Complaints will only be shared on a need to know basis.

Contact Details Ofsted 0300 123 1231

LADO Contact details: **01422 394055/ 07769886090** and email: ladoadmin@calderdale.gov.uk

Related Policies

Partnership with Parents

Whistle Blowing Policy

Confidentiality Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

This policy will be reviewed by management annually, who are responsible for ensuring the dissemination of this policy to all staff, volunteers and parents.