



Complaints Procedure

Policy statement

Our setting 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, including those relating to Free Entitlement and staff complaints. We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

Procedures

All settings are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond. This is to be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with the joint managers.
- We would hope that most complaints would be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- We record the issue and how it was resolved, in the child's file.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the manager/s.

- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints in the Complaint Investigation Record; the form may be completed and signed by the parent.
- The setting stores written complaints from parents in their child's personal folder. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the Deputy/Managers will store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Deputy or Managers 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 summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record, which is made available to Ofsted upon request.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the managers and the chair of the management committee. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the managers should have the support of the chairperson of the management committee.
- 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 record is stored in the child's personal file and a copy in a designated complaints file and the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three meeting the parent and setting 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.
- Advice may be sought from external support agencies, such as the Local Authority or Early Years Alliance, where appropriate.

- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (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 manager and 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. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. Parents receive a copy of the record, a copy is included in the child's file and the designated complaints file and the summative points are included in the Complaints Summary Record.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board and local safeguarding partners and the Information Commissioners Office

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of the complaint 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 the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
- Parents can complain to Ofsted by telephone or in writing at:

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

Tel: 0300 123 1231

- These details are displayed in our setting's reception area.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board or local safeguarding partners.

- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed, and the manager works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.
- The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) can be contacted if you have made a complaint about the way your data is being handled and remain dissatisfied after raising your concern with us. For further information about how we handle your data, please refer to the Privacy Notice given to you when you registered your child at setting. The ICO can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or ico.org.uk

Complaints relating to Free 15/30 hour Entitlement

The setting offers Free Entitlement services in line with the Kent Provider Agreement for Free Early Education for two, three and four years old in Kent.

- Any parent who has a concern about their child's Free Entitlement should, in the first instance raise their concerns with the manager.
- The setting will work in partnership with The Education People (KCC) and parents to ensure all eligible children receive their Free Entitlement. Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- If parents are not satisfied their children has received a free place or with any aspect of the way they have received it. The complaints process can be viewed online at the link below. Kent Children and Family Information Services (KCFIS) will also assist parents who do not have access to the internet who wish to make a complaint.

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/contact-us/complaints-and-feedback#tab7>

you can contact KCFIS:

03000 41 23 23, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm (except bank holidays).

kentcfis@theeducationpeople.org

[Childcare and pre-school - Kent County Council](#)

For Providers

- If a childcare provider wishes to make a complaint about the management and/or administration of the Free Early Education funding, please find details on the link below:

Complaints procedures for Staff:

Grievances and concerns, problems or complaints raised by a staff member with management. Anybody may at some time have problems or concerns with their working conditions or relationships with colleagues that they wish to raise. See [Grievance policy](#).

Records

- A record of complaints in relation to the setting, or the children or the adults working in the setting, is kept for at least three years; including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in Complaint Investigation Record, which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors to view on request.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

NWPS

Held on

Date to be reviewed

April 2024

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Chair