



## 10.12 Making a complaint

### Policy statement

At St Gabriel's 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 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 [with the Pre-school Leader or a member of the Pre-school Management Committee. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns. Our intention here at St Gabriel's is to work in partnership with Parents/carer/guardians and our community and we would welcome suggestions on how to improve our provision at any time. 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 written record of any complaints that reach stage two and above, and their outcome. This is to be made available to parents, as well as to Ofsted inspectors on request. A full procedure is set out in the Pre-school Learning Alliance publication Complaint Investigation Record (2012) which acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose.

### *Making a complaint*

#### Stage 1

- Any parent/carer/guardian that has a concern about an aspect of our setting's provision talks over his/her concerns with our Pre-school Leader or a member of the Pre-school Management Committee first of all.
- Most complaints should 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.
- 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 by the Pre-school Leader or a member of the Pre-school Management Committee and signed by the parent/carer/guardian.
- St Gabriel's Pre-school setting stores all information relating to written complaints from parents/carer/guardians in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the Pre-school Leader or a member of the Pre-school Management Committee may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.



## 10.12 Making a complaint cont'd

### ***Making a complaint***

#### Stage 2 cont'd

- We inform parents/carer/guardians of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of him/her making the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, we log the summative points in our Complaint Investigation Record, which is made available to Ofsted on request.

#### Stage 3

- If the parent/carer/guardian is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with our Pre-school Leader a member of the Pre-school Management Committee. The parent/carer/guardian may have a friend or partner present if they prefer and our Pre-school Leader should have the support of the Pre-school 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, we log the summative points in our Complaint Investigation Record.

#### Stage 4

- If at the stage three meeting the parent/carer/guardian cannot reach agreement with us, we invite an external mediator 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 us 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 are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with our staff and the parent/carer/guardian, 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/carer/guardian and Pre-school Leader and a member 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.

# St Gabriel's Pre-school



## 10.12 Making a complaint cont'd

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#### Stage 5 cont'd

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, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board***

- Parents/carers/guardians 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 the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.

Parents/carers/guardians can complain to Ofsted by telephone on Tel: 0300 123 1231

Or in writing to: Ofsted National Business Unit, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

- These details are displayed on our setting's notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, we follow the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- In these cases, both the parents/carers/guardian and our setting are informed and our Pre-school Leader and the Nominated person from the Pre-school Management Committee work 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 in relation to our setting, or the children or the adults working in our 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 our Complaint Investigation Record, which is available for parents/carers/guardians and Ofsted inspectors to view on request.

**At St Gabriel's Pre-School we believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at the early stage. We also believe the best interests of the pre-school and parent/carer/guardian that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly, and which respects confidentiality.**

This policy was adopted by

St Gabriel's Pre-school

On

May 2017

Date to be reviewed

May 2018

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Rev'd Pam Goddard

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

Chair

