

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

*Our Pre-School believes that children and parents/carers 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 managers or Chairperson of the committee. The Pre-School Managers will always be informed of any action that has been taken unless the complaint is against the Pre-School Managers. 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 our setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

**Methods**

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure. We will keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage 2 or beyond. This is to be made available to parents/carers as well as to Ofsted inspectors on request.

*Making a complaint*

*At each stage, after a period of time has elapsed (to be agreed depending on the resolution required), the Pre-School Manager must review the complaint to ensure any remedial action determined has taken effect, thus ensuring no recurrence. Otherwise the Pre-School Manager can determine if further action is required.*

Stage 1:

* Any parent/carer who has a concern about an aspect of the setting’s provision talks with the Pre-School Manager.
* 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/carer moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing or by email to the Pre-School Manager and the Chair of the Management Committee within 14 days. (If they do not feel comfortable with making written complaints then this may be written down for them by the managers and signed by the parent/carers.
* The Pre-School stores written complaints from parents/carers in the complaints file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation of Pre-School practice or staff, the setting Manager 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 Pre-School Manager meets with the parent/carer to discuss the outcome. We must inform them of the outcome within 28 days of the complaint being made.
* When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3:

* If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Pre-School Manager and the Chair of the Management Committee to be held within 7 days. The parent/carer can have a friend or partner present if required and our managers should have the support of one of the management team.
* 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 summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4:

* If at the Stage 3 meeting the parent/carer and Pre-School 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.
* Staff or volunteers within the Pre-School Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
* The mediator keeps all discussion confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the Pre-School Managers and Chair of the Management Committee and the parent/carer, if it is decided this would 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, the Pre-School Managers and the 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. Everyone present, at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.
* Follow up procedure as a cross-check to ensure any agreed action taken has worked; ensuring concern is not repeated in the future.

Any complaints about the Pre-School Manager will follow the same procedures as above but will be carried out by the Deputy Pre-School Manager and the Chair of the Management Committee.

**The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Information Commissioner’s Office**

* **Parents/carers 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 can complain to Ofsted by telephone or in writing at: Ofsted National Business Unit, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD. Telephone: 0300 123 1231.

* These details are displayed on our setting's notice board.
* If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Suffolk Safe Guarding Children Board in our local authority.
* In these cases, both the parent/carer and the Pre-School are informed and the Pre-School Managers work with Ofsted or the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.
* The 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 with our setting. The ICO can be contacted at Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF or by going to ico.org.uk

**Records**

* A record of complaints against our Pre-School and/or the children and/or the adults working in our Pre-School is kept for at least 3 years 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/carers and Ofsted inspectors on request.

This policy links to:

Safeguarding Children Policy

Working in Partnership with Parents

Confidentiality Policy

Employment Policy

GDPR

**Responsibility**

* Stonham Aspal Pre-School will ensure that all volunteers, staff and others involved in its work follow and implement this policy wherever possible
* The managerial responsibility for this Policy will lie with the Stonham Aspal Pre-School management committee
* This Complaints Procedure will be evaluated and reviewed by the management committee on an annual basis.

**This Complaints Procedure was adopted at a meeting of the Stonham Aspal Pre-School Committee:**

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| **Date** | **June 2020** |
| **To be reviewed again by:** | **June 2021** |
| **Chairperson signature** |  |
| **Pre-School Manager**  **signature** |  |