

10 WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

10.2 Complaints procedure for parents and service users

There is a fair way of dealing with issues as they arise in an informal way, but parents may wish to exercise their right to make a formal complaint. They are informed of the procedure to do this, and complaints are responded to in a timely way. The same procedures apply to agencies who may have a grievance or complaint.

Parents

- If a parent is unhappy about any aspect of their child's care or how he/she feels he/she has been treated, this should be discussed with a manager. The manager will listen to the parent and acknowledge what he/she is unhappy about. The manager will offer an explanation and an apology if appropriate. The issue and how it was resolved is recorded in the child's file and Complaint Investigation Record. The recording will also make clear whether the issue being raised relates to a concern about quality of the service or practice, or a complaint. For allegations relating to serious harm to a child caused by a member of staff or volunteer procedure **8.2 Allegations against staff, volunteers or agency staff** will be followed.
- If the parent is not happy with the manager's response or wishes to complain about the any member of staff, he/she will be directed to the owner. Some parents will want to make a written complaint; others will prefer to make it verbally; in which case the owner writes down the main issues of the complaint using the Complaint Investigation Record and keeps it on file.
- The owner will investigate the complaint and provide time to feedback to the parent within 28 days. A confidential written report of the investigation is kept in the child's file if the complaint relates directly to a child.
- If the complainant believes that the matter has not been resolved and there has been a breach of the EYFS requirements, they are entitled to make a complaint to Ofsted. The manager will assist in any complaint investigation as well as in producing documentation that records the steps that were taken in response to the original complaint.
- The owner ensures that parents know they can complain to Ofsted by telephone or in writing at any time as follows:

Applications, Regulatory and Contact (ARC) Team, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD or telephone: 0300 123 1231

Agencies

- If an individual from another agency wishes to make a formal complaint about a member of staff or any practice of the setting, it should be made in writing to the owner.
- The complaint is acknowledged in writing within 10 days of receiving it.
- The owner investigates the matter and meets with the individual to discuss the matter further within 28 days of the complaint being received.
- An agreement needs to be reached to resolve the matter.

Ofsted complaints record

- Legislation requires settings to keep a record of complaints and disclose these to Ofsted at inspection, or if requested by Ofsted at any other time.
- The record of complaints is a summative record only.

A record of complaints will be kept for at least 3 years.

- In all cases where a complaint is upheld a review will be undertaken by the owner to look for ways to improve practice where it is required.

This procedure is made clear to parents.

Further guidance

Complaint Investigation Record (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2015)