



## **Making a complaint**

### **Policy statement**

At Little Squirts we believe that children and parents are entitled to and 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 provision provided. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly, by an informal approach with the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have set procedures for dealing with concerns.

### **Our intention**

We intend to bring all concerns about the running of the setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all parties involved.

### **Procedures**

All settings are required to keep a written record of any complaints, along with their outcome, that reach stage two and above. This is to be made available to parents, as well as Ofsted inspectors on request. A full procedure is set out in the Pre-school Learning Alliance publication Complaint Investigation Record (2012) which act as the 'summery log' for this purpose.

### **Making a complaint**

#### *Stage 1*

Any parent who has concerns about an aspect of our settings provision should first discuss them with the Manager who will aim to resolve the issue amicably and informally. This will then be recorded, detailing how the issue was resolved and will be kept 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 their concerns or complaint in writing. There is a template available to parents in the Complaint Investigation Record which may be completed by the Manager and signed by the parent if necessary.

Our setting stores all information relating to written complaints in the child's file, however, if the complaint requires a detailed investigation, our Manager may wish to store all the information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated to this complaint.

Once the investigation is completed, our Manager meets with the parent(s) to discuss the outcome, this meeting will take place within 28 days of the parent making the complaint.

In the instance that the complaint is resolved at this stage, we will log the summative points in our Complaints Investigation Record, which is made available to Ofsted.

### *Stage 3*

If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation they should request a meeting with our Manager and/or Director (Owner) the parent is entitled to have a friend or partner present and the meeting will be conducted by 2 members of the Management team.

An agreed written record of the discussion is made, as well as any decision or action taken as a result. All parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy. The signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded and we log the summative points in our Complaints Investigation Record.

### *Stage 4*

If at the stage three meeting the parent cannot reach an 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 mediators.

The mediator will keep all discussions confidential and can hold separate meetings with our staff and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator will keep an agreed written record of any meetings that are held along with any advice given.

### *Stage 5*

When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between the parent and our Manager or Director is held with the purpose being to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediators advice is used and they can be present at the meeting if all parties agree that this will help in the decision making.

A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, is made and everyone present must sign the record. All parties present will receive a copy of the record and this 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 may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the settings 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 writing at:

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

Tel: 0300 123 1231

These details are displayed in the setting along with other useful numbers for parents.

If a child appears to be at risk, we follow the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

In these cases, both the parent and the setting are informed and our Manager works with Ofsted or the Local safeguarding Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

## **Records**

A record of complaints in relation to our setting, the children or adults working in the setting, is kept for at least 3 years; including the date, circumstances of complaint and how it was managed. The outcome of all complaints are recorded in our Complaint Investigation Record, which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors to view on request.

This policy was adopted by Little Squirts Preschool on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019 (review date 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020)

Signed.....

Name.....

Role.....