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Making a Complaint

Bradpole Preschool 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 members of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns. We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our setting to a satisfactory conclusion or 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 Ofsted inspectors on request. A full procedure is set out in the Preschool Learning Alliance publication *Complaint Investigation Record* (2012) which acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose.

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks over, first of all, their concerns with the Preschool Leader
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage

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 setting leader and the committee
- 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 with the Preschool Leader and signed by the parent
- Bradpole Preschool stores written complaints in the child's personal file, however, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the Preschool Leader may store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Preschool Leader meets with parents 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 Complaint Investigation Record



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Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Preschool Leader and the Preschool Committee Chair
- 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 if 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 Complaint Investigation Record

Stage 4

- If at the stage three meeting the parent and the Preschool cannot reach agreement, an external mediator is invited to help 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 Preschool Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. They can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (setting leader and chair) 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 given

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between the parent and the Preschool Leader and chair is held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator is present at this 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



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The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership (SCP)

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaint's procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the Preschool'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.
- To contact Ofsted with regard a complaint: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted
- These details are displayed on our noticeboard
- If a child appears at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership (SCP)
- In these cases, both parent and Preschool are informed and the Preschool, Leader works with Ofsted or the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership (SCP) 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; including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaint Investigation Record, which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request

Other useful Preschool Learning Alliance publications

- Complaints Investigation Record (2012)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of: The Committee of Bradpole Preschool

Held during Autumn term 2023

Date to be reviewed: Autumn term 2024