Making a Complaint Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

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 through an informal approach to the appropriate member 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 for all parties involved.

Procedures

All settings are required to keep a written record of any complaints that reach Stage 2 and above, and their outcome. This is to be made available to parents, as well as Ofsted inspectors, upon 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 should first discuss their concerns with the Preschool Leads.

• 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 their concerns or complaint in writing to the Preschool Leader and the Committee.

• For parents who are not comfortable 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 records of complaints in a complaints file, which is kept securely locked away. This ensures that a record is maintained of all complaints relating to our setting, the children attending, or the adults working within the setting. These records include the date, circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.

• When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Preschool Leads meets with the parent(s) 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 summary points are logged in the *Complaint Investigation Record*.

The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the *Complaint Investigation Record*, which is available to parents and Ofsted inspectors upon request.

Stage 3

• If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they may request a meeting with the Preschool Leads and the Preschool Committee Chair.
• An agreed written record of the discussion is made, together with any decisions or actions to be taken as a result. All 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 summary points are logged in the *Complaint Investigation Record*.

Stage 4

• If, at the Stage 3 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 taken so far, and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.
• Staff or volunteers within the Preschool Learning Alliance may be appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
• The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. They may hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (the Preschool Leads and Chair) and the parent if this is considered 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, the Preschool Leader, and the Chair 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 help reach this conclusion. The mediator may be present at this meeting if all parties agree that this would be helpful.
• 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 Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP)

• Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there appears to be a possible breach of the Preschool's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registration and inspection body with a duty to ensure that the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are adhered to.
• To contact Ofsted regarding a complaint, visit:
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted
• These details are displayed on our noticeboard.
• If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP).

• In these cases, both the parent and the Preschool are informed, and the Preschool Leader works with Ofsted or the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Other Useful Preschool Learning Alliance Publications

• *Complaint Investigation Record* (2012)

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

Held during Autumn Term 2026.

Date to be reviewed: Autumn Term 2027