

## Complaints

### Policy statement

Little Learners believes that children and parents are entitled to courtesy and prompt and careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our nurseries and will give immediate attention to any concerns about the running of our nurseries. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly using an informal approach. 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 nurseries to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

All nurseries are required to keep a written record of any complaints, and their outcome.

### Our Procedures

#### 1. Making a complaint

##### Stage 1: Informal Stage

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of nursery life should in the first instance talk over the concern with the room leader.
- Most complaints can be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

##### Stage 2: Formal Stage

- If stage 1 does not achieve a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concern or complaint verbally, or in writing to the Nursery Manager.
- Stage 2 complaints are filed in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the manager may file all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for the complaint which will be locked in a confidential place.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the manager will meet with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- Parents will be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 10 days of making the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in a record that is stored centrally.

##### Stage 3: Appeal

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she can request a meeting with the Head of Support Services, Julia Ward, who can be contacted on 020 8597 2900 or by emailing [juliaward@lifelineprojects.co.uk](mailto:juliaward@lifelineprojects.co.uk).
- The parent may have a friend or partner present at an appeal meeting if they prefer and the Nursery Manager may have the support of a member of the management team if required.
- A written record of the discussion will be made, as well as any decision or action agreed during the meeting. All of the parties present at the meeting will sign the record and receive a copy of it.
- This signed record signifies that the procedure has been concluded.

- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in a record that is stored centrally.

#### Stage 4: Mediation

- If the parent and nursery cannot reach agreement at the appeal stage, 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.
- Little Learners staff or volunteers, or advisors who work for Local Authority Early Years teams are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. Separate meetings can be held with the nursery staff 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: Final Outcome

- When the mediator has concluded the investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the Nursery Manager and a member of Little Learners management team 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.

### 2. The role of (Ofsted)

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure.
- The number to call Ofsted with regard to a complaint is 0300 123 1231.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our nurseries follow the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board in our local authority.
- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the Nursery Manager works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

### 3. Records

- A record of complaints against our nurseries and/or the children and/or the adults working in our nurseries is kept, including dates, circumstances of complaints and how they were managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the complaints record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

This policy meets the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the EYFS 4<sup>TH</sup> January 2024

Date policy last reviewed/updated	June 2024	Reviewed by	Julia Ward, Head of Support Services
Date of next review/update	June 2025		

