



# Spinney Pre-School Complaints Policy

## Statement of intent

At Spinney Pre School, we aim to maintain a caring and supportive learning environment where children benefit from the best possible start to their Pre School journey. All staff work hard to continually improve our Pre School and build strong positive relationships with Parents. However, the Pre School needs procedures in place in case there are complaints by Parents/Carers. The following procedure is to help you to raise a concern or complaint relating to the Pre School. To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints, they should be brought to the attention of the Pre School as soon as possible. (In general, any matter raised more than 3 months after the event will not be considered) We need to be clear about the difference between a concern and a complaint. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the numbers that develop into formal complaints.

## Procedures

As a Pre School, we aim to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding. We will always put the interests of the child first. We aim to provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed and then resolved.

## Raising a concern or complaint

### 1. Informal stage.

- As part of our open door approach to seeing parents at the beginning and end of the Pre School sessions, we would encourage Parents/Carers to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned, usually this will be the child's Keyperson. It may be more convenient or appropriate to speak to the member of staff at another time when your child is not with you or over the telephone if you are unable to get into Pre School. We are happy to arrange a mutually convenient time to talk through your concerns. Most concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or providing information and the majority of concerns will be resolved at this informal stage. All staff work hard to make sure that your child is happy at school and they want to resolve any concerns that arise so we can make sure your child makes good progress. In the case of serious concerns it may be appropriate to address them directly to the Supervisor (or to the Chairperson of the Committee, if the complaint is about the Supervisor). If you are uncertain about who to contact, please seek advice from the Chairperson.
- If your concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage you may choose to put the complaint in writing and address it to the Supervisor, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. If the complaint is about the Supervisor, your complaint should be addressed to the Chairperson. A complaint form is provided in the appendix 1 to assist you. You should include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events and copies of relevant documents. It is very important that you include a clear statement of the actions you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the Pre School. The envelope should be addressed to the Supervisor, or to the Chairperson as appropriate. The Supervisor (or Chair) may invite you to a meeting to clarify your concerns and to explore the possibility of an informal resolution. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by a friend, if you wish, to assist you in explaining the nature of your concerns. It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the Supervisor (or Chair). If not, arrangements will be made for the matter to be fully investigated, using the appropriate procedure. In any case you should learn in writing, usually within the 5 days of the Pre School receiving your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescales. Any investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded you will be informed in writing of its conclusion. If you are not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may request that the Committee reviews the process followed by the Pre School in handling the complaint. Any such request must be made in writing to the Chairperson within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome and include a statement specifying any perceived failure to follow the procedure. The procedure below will be followed. A review request form is provided in Appendix 2 for your convenience.

## **Review process**

- Any review of the processes followed by the Pre School will be conducted by a panel of 3 members of the Committee. This will usually take place within 10 Pre School days of receipt of your request. The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable request to make oral representation should be considered sympathetically.

## **Policy review and monitoring**

The Supervisor retains all complaints received by the Pre School and how they were resolved in the complaint folders. The Committee monitor the complaints procedure in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Committee take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process and make any modifications to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents and carers and on the website.

## **Section 2 -Policy for handling Unreasonably Persistent, Harassing or Abusive complainants.**

Sometimes Parents or Carers pursuing complaints or other issues treat staff and others in a way that is unacceptable. Whilst we recognise that some complaints may relate to serious and distressing incidents, we will not accept threatening or harassing behaviour towards any members of the Pre School community.

What is meant by “an unreasonably persistent complainant?”

This is anyone who engages in unreasonable behaviour when making a complaint. This will include persons who pursue complaints in an unreasonable manner.

### **Unreasonable behaviour may include:**

Actions which are:-

- Out of proportion to the nature of the complaint or
- Persistent – even when the complaints procedure has been exhausted or
- Personally harassing or
- Unjustifiably repetitious
- An insistence on pursuing unjustified complaints and/or
- Unrealistic outcomes to justified complaints
- Pursuing justifiable complaints in an unreasonable manner (e.g. using abusive or threatening language) or
- Making complaints in public or via social networking site such as Facebook or
- Refusing to attend appointments to discuss the complaint.

### **What is harassment?**

We regard this as the unreasonable pursuit of issues or complaints, particularly if the matter appears to be pursued in a way intended to cause personal distress rather than to seek a resolution.

Behaviour may fall within the scope of this policy if:

It appears to be deliberately targeted at one or more members of Pre School staff or others, without good cause

The way in which a complaint or other issues is pursued (as opposed to the complaint itself) causes undue distress to school staff or others.

It has a significant and disproportionate adverse effect on the Pre School community.

### **The Pre School expects anyone who wishes to raise concerns with the Pre School to:**

- Treat all members of the Pre School community with courtesy and respect
- Respect the needs of pupils and staff within the Pre School
- Avoid the use of violence, or threats of violence, towards people or property;
- And allow the Pre School a reasonable time to respond to a complaint
- Follow the Pre School’s complaint procedure

**In cases of unreasonably persistent complaints or harassment the Pre School may take some or all of the following steps as appropriate**

- Inform the complainant informally that his/her behaviour is now considered by the Pre School to be unreasonable or unacceptable, and request a changed approach
- Inform the complainant in writing that the school considers his/her behaviour to fall under the terms of the unreasonably persistent complaints/Harassment Policy
- Require all future meetings with a member of staff to be conducted with a second person present. In the interests of all parties, notes of these meetings may be taken

**The Committee will not tolerate any form of physical or verbal aggression against members of the Pre School community. If there is evidence of any such aggression the school may:**

- Ban the individual from entering the Pre School site, with immediate effect
- Prosecute under Anti-Harassment legislation
- Call the police to remove the individual from the premises, under powers provided by the Education Act 1996.

Legitimate new complaints will always be considered, even if the person making them is (or has been) subject to the Unreasonably Persistent Complaints/Harassment Policy. The subject nevertheless reserves the right not to respond to communications from individuals subject to the policy.

**Spinney Pre School**

**Outline of Complaint procedure**

Informal stage	Talk to your child's Keyperson.
Formal Complaint	
Stage 1 Appendix 1 form	Complaint can be put in writing to the Supervisor (using template provided in appendix 1). The Supervisor will contact the Parent/Carer within 5 school days of receiving the formal complaint stating how the school intends to proceed and anticipated timescales. (meeting/investigation)
Stage 2 Appendix 2 form	Complaints can be put in writing to the Chairperson using the template provided in Appendix 2 requesting a review of the process followed by the Pre School in handling the complaint. Complaints heard by the Chairperson's complaint panel within 10 days of receiving the request.

**Spinney Pre School**

**Complaints Policy**

**Appendix 1- Formal Complaint Form**

**(Address to Supervisor, or Chairperson if about the Supervisor)**

**Your name:**

**Relationship with the Pre School (e.g. Parent of a pupil)**

**Pupil's name (if relevant to the matter to be discussed)**

**Your address:**

**Telephone numbers:**

**Please give concise details of your complaint (including dates, names of witnesses etc.) to allow the matter to be fully investigated:**

**You may continue on a separate paper, or attach additional documents if you wish**

**What action, if any have you already taken to resolve your complaint? (who have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?)**

**What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?**

**Signed .....**

**Date.....**

Pre School use:

Date form received:

Received by:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Complaint referred to ;			
Date;			

**Spinney Pre School**  
**Complaints policy**  
**Appendix 2- Complaint Review Request Form**  
**(Address to Chairperson)**

**Your name:**

**Relationship with the Pre School (e.g. Parent of a pupil)**

**Pupil's name (if relevant to the matter to be discussed)**

**Your address:**

**Telephone numbers:**

**Dear Sir/Madam,**

**I submitted a formal complaint to the Pre School on ..... and am  
dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed. My complaint was submitted to  
..... and I received a response from .....on.....**

**I have attached copies of my formal complaint and of the response(s) from the school.**

**I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out because;**

**You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents if you wish.**

**What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?**

**Signed**.....

**Date**.....

Pre School Use:

Date Form received:

Received by:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Pre School Use:  
  
Date Form received:  
  
Received by:  
  
Date acknowledgement sent:  
  
Acknowledgement sent by:

Complaint referred to :

Date:

Complaint referred to :  Date:		
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*The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (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 setting's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
- The number to call Ofsted with regard to a complaint is:

Parents/Carers The address and telephone number for Ofsted is: <b>Applications Regulatory &amp; Contact (ARC) Team Ofsted Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD Telephone: 0300 123 1231 Email address: <a href="mailto:enquires@ofsted.gov.uk">enquires@ofsted.gov.uk</a> Website address: <a href="http://www.ofsted.gov.uk">www.ofsted.gov.uk</a></b>	Staff etc The address and telephone number for Ofsted is: <b>Applications Regulatory &amp; Contact (ARC) Team Ofsted Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD Telephone: 0300 123 1231 Email address: <a href="mailto:enquires@ofsted.gov.uk">enquires@ofsted.gov.uk</a> Website address: <a href="http://www.ofsted.gov.uk">www.ofsted.gov.uk</a></b>
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- These details are displayed on our setting's notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of Halton Children & Young People Safeguarding Partnership in our local authority.
- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the setting Supervisor works with Ofsted or Halton Children & Young People Safeguarding Partnership to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

#### **Records**

- A record of complaints against our setting and/or the children and/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 Summary Complaints Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

**This Policy was adopted at a meeting of the Pre-School held on (date) \_\_\_\_\_**

**Signed on behalf of the Pre-School \_\_\_\_\_**