



Safeguarding children

1.9 Complaints Procedure

ISSUE NUMBER	ISSUE DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGE
1	Mar 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Following on from N.C.C Information Alert 4 Funding Agreement 2023/2024 stage 2 the following additions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) 'Our Complaints Policy is issued to all families as part of the registration process. It is also available on our website'. Pg. 1b) 'Where parents/carers are not satisfied that their child is receiving the free entitlement in the correct way (as set out in the N.C.C Funding agreement and in the Early Education and Childcare Statutory guidance for local authorities), a complaint can be submitted direct to the manager'. Pg. 2

Aims

Buttercups Pre-school 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 with 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 of the parties involved.

A copy of our Complaints Policy is issued to all families as part of the registration process. It is also available on our website.

Complaints Procedure

Under normal circumstances the Leader will be responsible for managing complaints. However, in the event of a complaint being made against the Leader, the Registered Person will conduct the investigation. All complaints that reach stage two or above will be recorded in the Group's Complaints Summary record along with their outcome (this is stored in the metal filing cabinet). These details will be available to both parents and Ofsted inspectors.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent/carer who has a concern about any aspect of the setting's provision will first of all discuss his/her concerns with the child's key person. The key person will listen to the parent and acknowledge what he/she is unhappy about. The key person will offer an explanation and an apology if appropriate. The issue and how it was resolved is recorded in the child's file and Complaints Investigation Record. The recording will also make clear whether the issue being raised relates to a concern about quality of the service or practice, or a complaint. For allegations relating to serious harm to a child caused by a member of staff the Safeguarding Policy 1:1 will be followed.
- If the parent is not happy with the key person's response or wishes to complain about the key person or any other member of staff, he/she will be directed to the setting manager.
- In the case where parents/carers are not satisfied that their child is receiving the free entitlement in the correct way (as set out in the N.C.C Funding agreement and in the Early Education and Childcare Statutory guidance for local authorities), a complaint can be submitted direct to the manager.
- If a satisfactory solution cannot be found then Stage 2 of the procedure will be implemented.

Stage 2

This requires the parent/carers to put their complaint in writing to the Pre-school Leader or Chair as appropriate. Relevant names, dates, evidence and any other important information on the nature of the complaint should be included.

- The parent/carer will receive an acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint as soon as possible and a full and formal response will be made within 28 days of the complaint being made.

- The response will include recommendations for dealing with the complaint and for any amendments to the Group's policies or procedures which emerge from the investigation.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Pre-school leader and the Chair of the management committee. The parent may have a friend or partner present if required and the leader should have the support of the Chairperson of the management committee.
- 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 of 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 Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three meeting the parent and setting cannot reach agreement, 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.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (setting leader and chair of the management committee) 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 s/he gives.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the Pre-school leader and the chair of the management committee 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.

The role of Ofsted, Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Information Commissioners Office.

- Parent/carers may contact Ofsted directly at any stage of the complaints procedure if they feel their complaint has not been dealt with or investigated appropriately:

Ofsted can be contacted at Applications, Regulatory and Contact (ARC) Team, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD or telephone: 0300 123 1231 or enquires@ofsted.gov.uk
- The Group will notify parent/carers when they are being inspected and a copy of the Ofsted report will be available, at all times, for parent/carers to read.

If the Leader or Chair believes that there are child protection implications they will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), The Children’s Advice and Duty Service (CADS) or the Police as appropriate and detailed in the Group’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 1:1

- The Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) can be contacted if you have made a complaint about the way your data is being handled and remain dissatisfied after raising your concern with us. For further information about how we handle your data, please refer to the Privacy Notice given to you when you registered your child at our setting. The ICO can be contacted at Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or ico.org.uk

Records

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

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	<u>Buttercups Pre-school</u>
Held on	<u>2nd May 2024</u>
Date to be reviewed	<u>2nd May 2026</u>

Signed on behalf of the management
committee

Name of signatory

Jo Reed

Role of signatory

Chair person

Staff/Committee Member	Date read	Signature
Sue Fuller		
Christine Fletcher		
Charlotte Chilvers		
Ruby Kilvington		
Sarah Jacob		