



10. Working in partnership with parents and other agencies policy

Alongside associated procedures in 10.1 to 10.2 Working in partnership with parents and other agencies, this policy was adopted by Little Fishes on 01/05/2022.

Section 10.2: Complaints' procedures was reviewed and adopted in October 21

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10. Policy: Working in partnership with parents and other agencies

Aim

We actively promote partnership with parents and recognise the importance of working in partnership with other agencies to promote the well-being of children and their families. This includes signposting parents to support as appropriate.

Objectives

- We believe that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and our practice aims to involve and consult parents on all aspects of their child's well-being.
- We also recognise the important role parents play in the day-to-day organisation of the provision.
- We consider parents views and expectations and will give the opportunity to be involved in the following ways:
 - sharing information about their child's needs, likes, achievements and interests through the *09.1e background form*
 - helping with settling in their child to the agreed plan according to our settling in procedures
 - taking part in children's activities and outings
 - contributing with ideas or resources as appropriate to enhance the curriculum of the setting
 - taking part in early learning projects, sharing with practitioners' knowledge and insights about their child's learning
 - contributing to assessment with information, photos and stories that illustrate how their child is learning within the home environment, contributing to Tapestry, taking part in day-to-day family activities
 - taking part in planning, preparing, or simply participating in social activities organised within the setting
 - taking part in a parent forum to encourage the democratic participation of parents in discussions about the day-to-day organisation of the setting, consulting about new developments and other matters as they arise
 - involvement in the review of policies and procedures
 - Ofsted and setting contact details are displayed on the parent notice board for parents who have a complaint that cannot be resolved with the setting manager in the first instance, or where a parent is concerned that the EYFS standards are not being maintained

Partnership and signposting to other agencies

We are committed to ensuring effective partnership with other agencies including:

- local authority early years services about the EYFS, training and staff development
- social welfare departments regarding children in need and children who need safeguarding or for whom a child protection plan is in place
- child development networks and health professionals to support children with disabilities and special needs

- local community organisations and other childcare providers
- Ofsted and setting contact details are made available to other agencies who have a complaint that cannot be resolved with the Setting Manager in the first instance, or where a parent is concerned that the EYFS welfare standards are not being maintained.

10.1 Procedure: Working in partnership with parents and other agencies

We believe that families are central in all services we provide for young children. They are involved in all aspects of their child's care; their views are actively sought, and they are actively involved in the running of the setting in various ways.

We work in partnership with local and national agencies to promote the well-being of all children.

Families

- Parents are provided with written information about the setting, including the setting's safeguarding actions and responsibilities under the Prevent Duty
- Parents are made to feel welcome in the setting; they are greeted appropriately, there is adult seating and provision for refreshment when appropriate.
- When we refer to parents, we refer to people with parental responsibility. One parent may be the usual main contact, but we will seek to work sensitively and inclusively with parents who have less contact with the nursery such as working parents or parents who do not live with their children. We have flexible strategies to accommodate this.
- Every effort is made to accommodate parents who have a disability or impairment.
- The expectations we make on parents are made clear at the point of registration.
- There is a clear expectation that parents will participate in settling their child at the commencement of a place according to an agreed plan.
- There is sufficient opportunity for parents to share necessary information with staff and this is recorded and stored to protect confidentiality.
- Key persons support parents in their role as the child's first and most enduring educators.
- Key persons regularly share the child's progress with parents and share concerns if they arise. Parents are invited to also share their child's progress and concerns with us.
- Key persons/ SENCO work with parents to carry out an agreed plan to support a child's special educational needs.
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads work with parents to carry out any agreed tasks where a child protection plan is in place.
- Parents are involved in the social and cultural life of the setting and actively contribute.
- As far as possible the service is provided in a flexible way to meet the needs of parents without compromising the needs of children.
- Parents are involved in regular assessment of their child's progress, including the progress check at age two, as per procedure 09.15 Progress check at age two.
- There are effective means for communicating with parents on all relevant matters and 10.2 Complaints procedure for parents and service users is referred to when necessary.
- Every effort is made to provide an interpreter for parents who speak a language other than English and to provide translated written materials.

- Information about a child and their family is kept confidential within the setting. The exception to this is where there is cause to believe that a child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, or where there are concerns regarding their child's development that need to be shared with another agency. Parental permission will be sought unless there are reasons not to, to protect the safety of the child.
- Parental consent is sought to administer medication, take a child for emergency treatment, take a child on an outing, and take photographs for the purposes of record keeping.
- Parents' views are sought regarding changes in the delivery of the service.
- Currently a named parent representative encourages parent participation and contributes to decision making processes. It is hoped that from September 2022 a parent forum will be set up through which parents are actively encouraged to participate in decision making processes. We welcome any parent contribution or suggestion.
- Outside of the pandemic there will be opportunities for parents to take active roles in supporting their child's learning in the setting: informally through helping or activities with their child, or through structured projects engaging parents and staff in their child's learning. We encourage parents with any particular skills, training or interest to share them through activities.
- We signpost and share relevant information from other agencies with parents.

Agencies

- We work in partnership or in tandem with local and national agencies to promote the wellbeing of children.
- Procedures are in place for sharing of information about children and families with other agencies, as out in procedures 07.2 Confidentiality, recording and sharing information.
- Information shared by other agencies (third party information) is also kept in confidence and not shared without consent from that agency.
- When working in partnership with staff from other agencies, individuals are made to feel welcome in the setting and professional roles are respected.
- Staff follow the protocols for working with agencies, for example on child protection.
- Staff from other agencies do not have unsupervised access to the child they are visiting in the setting and do not have access to any other children during their visit.
- Staff do not casually share information or seek informal advice about any named child/family.
- We consult with and signpost to local and national agencies who offer a wealth of advice and information promoting staff understanding of issues facing them in their work and who can provide support and information for families. For example, ethnic/cultural organisations, drug/alcohol agencies, welfare rights advisors or organisations promoting childcare and education, or adult education.

Schools

- We work in partnership with local schools to assist children's transition as per procedure 09.14 Prime times – transition to school, and share information as per procedure 07.6 Transfer of records.

- The setting manager actively seeks to forge partnership with local schools with the aim of sharing best practice and creating a consistent approach

10.2 Procedure: Complaints procedures for parents and other agencies

At Little Fishes Nursery School, we hugely value the partnership we share with parents in providing care and early years education for children. If the provision ever drops below the very high standards that we set ourselves, we hope that parents will always feel able to raise any concerns by speaking to the Nursery Manager or a child's key person. We also recognise there might be occasions where a more formal complaint needs to be made. In these cases (which we hope will be rare), the following procedure should be used. We will always ensure that complaints of any nature are responded to in a timely way. The same procedures apply to agencies who may have a grievance or complaint.

Parents

- If a parent is unhappy about any aspect of their child's care or how he/she feels he/she has been treated, this should be discussed 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 Concerns and Complaints 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 or volunteer, procedures will be followed from the Safeguarding policy: 06.05 Allegations against staff.
- 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 Nursery Manager. Some parents will want to make a written complaint; others will prefer to make it verbally; in which case the Nursery Manager will make a record of the main issues of the complaint using the Concerns and Complaints Record and keep it in the child's file.
- The Nursery Manager will investigate the complaint and provide time to feedback to the parent within 28 days. A confidential written report of the investigation is kept in the child's file if the complaint relates directly to a child.
- If the parent is still not satisfied, or if the complaint is about the Nursery Manager, the setting manager is asked to forward their complaint verbally or in writing to the Vicar as Chair of Trustees who can be contacted on 01252 792402 or by email – vicar@stjamesrowledge.org.uk
- If the parent is still not satisfied, then he/she is entitled to appeal the outcome verbally or in writing to the Parochial Church Council as Trustees for further investigation, who will respond to the parent within a further 14 days.
- If the complainant believes that the matter has not been resolved and there has been a breach of the EYFS requirements, they are entitled to make a complaint to Ofsted. The Manager will assist in any complaint investigation as well as in producing documentation that records the steps that were taken in response to the original complaint.
- The Nursery Manager ensures that parents know they can complain to Ofsted by telephone or in writing at any time as follows:

Applications, Regulatory and Contact (ARC) Team,
Ofsted,
Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street,
Manchester
M1 2WD or telephone: 0300 123 1231

Agencies

- If an individual from another agency wishes to make a formal complaint about a member of staff or any practice of the setting, it should be made in writing to the Nursery Manager.
- The complaint is acknowledged in writing within 10 days of receiving it.
- The Nursery Manager investigates the matter and meets with the individual to discuss the matter further within 28 days of the complaint being received.
- An agreement needs to be reached to resolve the matter.
- If agreement is not reached, the complainant may write to the setting manager's line manager using the above procedure, who acknowledges the complaint within 5 days and reports back within 14 days.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they are entitled to appeal and are referred to the trustees, using the above procedure.

Ofsted complaints record

- Legislation requires settings to keep a record of complaints and disclose these to Ofsted at inspection, or if requested by Ofsted at any other time.
- The record of complaints is a summative record only. A record of complaints will be kept for at least 3 years.
- In all cases where a complaint is upheld a review will be undertaken by the PCC as Trustees to look for ways to improve practice where it is required.

Ofsted contact details are displayed on Parent Notice Board. This policy and procedure is available to parents in the parents policy folder and on the website in the parents section.

Legal references

Childcare Act 2006
Education Act 2011

Further guidance

Complaint Investigation Record (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2015)

This policy was adopted on: 01/04/22
Review date (24 months): 01/04/23
Name of Manager: Amber Delves
Signature:

