**Making a complaint Policy**

**Policy Statement**

Our playgroup 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 playgroup and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the playgroup. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by 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.

**Aim**

We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our playgroup to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

**Procedures**

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure. We are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage 2 or beyond. This is to be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors.

**Making a complaint**

Stage 1

• Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the playgroup's provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with the pre-school leader.

• 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 Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the preschool leader and the owner or chair of the management committee.

• The playgroup/committee will reply in writing within 20 days of receiving a compliant.

• For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints held at Playgroup; the form may be completed with the person in charge and signed by the parent.

• Our playgroup stores written complaints from parents in a complaints file.

• When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the pre-school leader meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.

• The playgroup / committee will inform the parent of the outcome of the investigation within 20 days of making the complaint.

• 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 should have a friend or partner present if required and the leader should have the support of the chairperson of the management committee, or the proprietor/senior manager, present.

• 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 3 meeting the parent and playgroup 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.

• Staff or volunteers within Surrey County Council are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.

• The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the playgroup personnel (pre-school 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 the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.**

• Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaint’s procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the playgroup'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 address and telephone number of our Ofsted regional centre are:

**Ofsted**

**Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD**

**Tel: 0300 1231231 '**

* These details are displayed on our playgroup's notice board.
* If a child appears to be at risk, our playgroup follows the procedure& of the Local Safeguarding Children Board in our local authority.
* In these cases, both the parent and playgroup are informed, and the pre-school leader works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

**Records**

* A record of complaints against our playgroup and/or the children and/or the adults working in our playgroup 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 Complaints summary Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

**Parents Behaviour**

* Our Playgroup must remain a safe and secure environment at all times therefore behaviour of a threatening nature (either verbal or physical) will not be tolerated. This will result in you being asked to remove your child from the Playgroup permanently.

**Other useful Pre-school Leaming Alliance publications**

• Summary Complaints Record (2006)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of………………………………………………………………………………………………

Held on: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….....

Date to be reviewed:…………………………………………………………………………………………...................................

Signed on behalf of the management committee………………………………………………………………………………..

Name of signatory:………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Role of signatory (e.g chair/secretary):………………………………………………………………………………………………..