

POLICY FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

NB: As Featherstone Children's Centre and Nursery School is Lead Body for Erdington Locality of Children's Centres this policy applies to all areas of our provision. This includes the school; Children's Centre sites and any outreach venues and therefore to any person attending (or whose child attends) the nursery school or any Children's Centre provision.

Introduction

Featherstone Children's Centre and Nursery School wants to deal with any issues, concerns and complaints that may arise as promptly and effectively as we can, and if parents have any concerns we encourage them in the first instance, to go directly to the person who is most appropriate - this will usually be the class teacher or member of staff, or the Deputy Head teacher or Head teacher

If those raising the concern are not **a parent or a guardian of a child attending the setting** the person or persons raising the concern should contact the Head teacher.

The setting is required by law to have a complaints procedure that aims to ensure that concerns and complaints are handled in a fair and non-adversarial manner.

The procedure is intended to deal with complaints relating to the actions of staff and the application of setting procedures where they affect individuals and children **except** in matters relating to:

- Curriculum
- A particular exclusion
- A particular child protection issue
- A special needs statement issue
- An admission issue

All of which are dealt with under separate procedures. Details of these procedures are available at the centre.

The setting encourages any complaint. We make every effort to resolve any concerns informally - we seek to resolve any concerns or complaints by following these steps.

Please note:

Any concern or complaint should be brought to the attention of the setting at the earliest opportunity; any matter raised more than 3 months after the event will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

An anonymous complaint will not be dealt with unless there are exceptional circumstances

Step one – Raising a concern.

It is expected that in most cases the class teacher or member of staff concerned will be able to resolve any concerns without the need to go any further. The person raising the concern will be invited to meet with the member of staff concerned at a convenient time in order to discuss their concerns in a positive atmosphere and including sufficient time for staff concerned to investigate the issue or concern.

Please note: Parents who unreasonably refuse a request for the concern or complaint to be dealt with informally may result in the setting being unwilling to take the issue further.

If, having raised a concern with the class teacher or member of staff the parent concerned is dissatisfied or if the class teacher or member of staff concerned is the subject of the complaint, then the process moves on to step two, contacting the Head teacher.

Step Two - Involving the Head teacher

The Head teacher may at this stage ask for the concerns to be put in writing but will usually be able to deal with the concerns in a face to face meeting with those concerned. The Head teacher will attempt to resolve the concerns using any reasonable means that she / he feels are appropriate: this may involve meeting with the person raising the concern to discuss the matter further, or delegating another senior member of staff to investigate.

The Head of teacher should be allowed reasonable time to investigate the concern or complaint and gather any information the she / he requires. On this basis the person raising the concern should expect to receive feedback no later than 10 working days after giving the details to the Head teacher. If the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied with the feedback from the Head teacher, or if the Head teacher is the subject of the complaint, then the process moves on to step three, contacting the Chair of Governors.

Step Three - Formally Notifying the Governing Body

The Governing Body has a responsibility to investigate and for ensuring that any complaints formally notified to them are addressed. If those raising the complaint have not raised the concern or complaint with the Head teacher, the Chair may advise that they do so, but otherwise, if the complaint has not already been put in writing, the chair will ask those concerned to do so and / or to complete a Complaint Form.

In cases that require urgent consideration the Chair may deal with the matter exclusively and without delay but usually a designated panel of 3 Governors will be convened to hear the complaint.

The designated governors will hear the complaint on an impartial basis via a **panel hearing** that must be held in private, and will aim to resolve the complaint and reconcile any differences between those complaining with the setting. The conduct and procedure of the hearing is detailed in the Complaints Procedure and those complaining will be given the opportunity to have a friend or representative, and / or a translator present at the hearing as requested.

The panel will:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part, or
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part, or
- Where appropriate decide the action to be taken, or
- Recommend changes to the centre systems or procedures to seek to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

However, it is recognised that those making the complaint might not be satisfied with the outcome if the hearing does not find in their favour, and therefore it may only be possible for the hearing to establish the facts and make recommendations.

Following the investigation those complaining will receive written feedback from the clerk including any decisions, recommendations and the reasons for them and, if appropriate next steps. This should be issued within ten working days after the investigation has concluded.

Please note:

If the outcome might lead to action under another procedure or is an internal management issue for the setting and therefore the responsibility of the Head teacher, those complaining may only be told that appropriate action will be taken.

This is the final step of the process for the centre (except for carrying – out agreed actions) and there is no more that the centre can do - trying to raise the issue further through the centre - may force us to treat the complaint as **vexatious**.

If, despite all stages of the procedure having been followed, those complaining remain dissatisfied, they may take the complaint to the LA who have a remit to review due process - there is no onus on them to re-open an investigation, etc. if they are satisfied that the setting has dealt with the complaint appropriately.

Policy agreed on: 22nd April 2015

Signed by Chair of Governors:

Review Date	Revision Number	Policy agreed with all necessary amendments Signature of Chair

