



Registered Charity No.: 1155711

Complaints Policy

We believe children and parents/carers are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and respect of their wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents/carers and the community generally and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our Pre-School at any time.

We will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about our Pre-School. We aim to bring all concerns about the running of the Pre-School to a satisfactory conclusion for all parties involved. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly through an informal approach with the Manager. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with these concerns.

Furthermore, the Pre-School undertakes a Parent Feedback Survey every year, from which feedback is noted and analysed by the management committee. Should any complaints/issues arise within this feedback, the Pre-School will be proactive in contacting the parent/carer where they have included their contact details, to seek to resolve the concern.

Formal Complaints Procedure

We operate a five stage action plan to deal with any concerns raised.

Stage One

- Any parent/carer who has a concern about an aspect of the Pre-School's provision should first approach the Manager. Most concerns can be resolved at this stage. We record the issue and how it was resolved in the child's file.

Stage Two

- If there is not a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent/carer should put their concern or complaint in writing to the Manager and to the Committee Chairperson.

For parents/carers who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints in the Complaint Investigation Record; the form may be completed by the Manager/Deputy Manager/Office Manager and signed by the parent.

- The Pre-School stores all information relating to written complaints from parents in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the Manager may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.
- The Committee Chairperson will undertake an investigation into the complaint or cause for concern.
- The Committee Chairperson may ask staff involved with the complaint to make a written statement explaining the exact situation.
- When the investigation is completed, the Manager and Committee Chairperson will meet with the parent/carer to discuss the outcome. This will happen within twenty-eight days of the original complaint being made.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, we log the summative points in our Complaint Investigation Record, which is made available to Ofsted on request.

Stage Three

- If the matter is still not resolved to the satisfaction of the parent/carer, then a meeting should be requested with the Manager and the Committee Chairperson/Deputy Chairperson. The parent/carer may have a friend or partner present if required.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All 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, we log the summative points in our Complaint Investigation Record.

Stage Four

- If at the stage three meeting the parent/carer and the Pre-School cannot reach agreement, the Pre-School will invite an external mediator in to help 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. Separate meetings can be held with the Manager and Committee Chair and the parent/carer if it is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice given.

Stage Five

- When the mediator has concluded their investigation, a final meeting between the parent/carer, the Manager and the Committee Chair is held. The purpose of the 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), the Local Safeguarding Children Board or local safeguarding partners and the Information Commissioner's Office

We would hope that parents/carers feel that they can initially approach the Manager or Committee Chairperson with any concerns or complaints. However, if they do not wish to do so parents/carers may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaint's procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the Pre-School's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.

Parents can complain to Ofsted by telephone or in writing at:

Ofsted National Business Unit, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Ofsted's details are displayed on our noticeboard.

If a child appears to be at risk, we follow the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board or local safeguarding partners.

In these cases, both the parent and the Pre-School will be informed, and the Manager will work with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board or local safeguarding partners to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) can be contacted if someone has made a complaint about the way their data is being handled and remain dissatisfied after raising their concern with the Pre-School. For further information about how we handle data, please refer to the Privacy Notice displayed at our Pre-School (a copy is available on request). The ICO can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF or ico.org.uk

Records

We are required to keep a written record of any complaints that reach stage two and above and their outcome. These records will be kept in the Pre-School Complaints Folder and will be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors on request. A full procedure is set out in the Complaint Investigation Record, which acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose.

The outcome of all complaints is recorded in our Complaints Investigation Record, which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors to view on request.

Fees

If a child has been withdrawn from the Pre-School as a result of a complaint, then a fee refund will be considered as part of the investigation but will depend on the individual circumstances and findings of the investigation into the complaint.

This policy has been adopted by St Martin's Pre-School CIO:

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| Date: | May 23 |
| Signed: | Hayleigh Simms |
| Role of signatory: | Committee Chairperson |