

## **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records**

Providers must put in place a written procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents and/or carers.

# **CROFTON EARLY LEARNERS**

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **Policy statement**

Crofton Early Learners 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 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 to 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.

### **Aim**

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

### **Procedures**

All settings are required to keep a written record of any complaints that reach stage two and above, and their outcome. This is to be made available to parents, as well as to Ofsted inspectors on request. A full procedure is set out in the (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2015) which acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose.

### **Making a complaint about the setting**

#### **Stage 1**

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of Crofton Early Learners' provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with the Leader.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- We record the issue, and how it was resolved, in the child's file.

#### **Stage 2**

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the Leader and the Trustees.
- For parents 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 with the Leader or Deputy and signed by the parent.
- Crofton Early Learners stores written complaints from parents in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the leader may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the leader meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- Parents must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaint Investigation Record.
- If the complaint is regarding the Leader, parents should contact the Chair of Trustees via the Church Office.

#### **Stage 3**

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the leader and the Chair of Trustees. The parent may have a friend or partner present if they prefer and the Leader should have the support of the Trustees.
- 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 Complaint Investigation Record, which is made available to Ofsted on request.

#### 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.
- Staff or volunteers within the Early Years Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (setting leader and chair of Trustees) 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 leader and the Chair of Trustees 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.

#### **Making a complaint about the Free Entitlement for 2,3 & 4 year-olds**

- The Council's complaints procedure for parents who are not able to resolve their concern directly with the provider where the parent is not satisfied that their child has received their free entitlement in accordance with the legislation or as set out in the FE Agreement and in Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities is set out in Appendix 1.

#### **The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Information Commissioner's Office.**

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the setting'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
- The number to call Ofsted with regard to a complaint is: 0300 123 1231
- These details are displayed on our setting's notice board.
- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the Leader works with Ofsted or the Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.
- If a child appears to be at risk, we follow the procedures of the Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- 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. 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; including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaint Investigation Record, which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

This policy was adopted by

CEL TRUSTEES

On

8 MAY 2021

Date to be reviewed

MAY 2024