



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

SMARTIES PRE SCHOOL & OUT OF SCHOOL CLUB

PROCEDURE

Smarties is committed to providing a safe, stimulating, consistent, and accessible service to children and their parents/carers. We always aim to provide high quality services for everyone, but accept that sometimes things do not always go to plan. In such circumstances, we want to know so that we can put right and learn from our mistakes.

This policy constitutes the setting's formal Complaints Procedure. It will be displayed on the premises at all times. Under normal circumstances, the Childcare Operations Manager will be responsible for managing complaints. Any complaint made against the Childcare Operations Manager should be directed to the Smarties Chairman who will notify the committee and they will investigate the matter and respond back to the complainant. All complaints made to staff will be recorded in detail on an Incident Form.

Stage One

If a parent/carer has a complaint about some aspect of the Setting's activity, or about the conduct of an individual member of staff, it will often be possible to resolve the problem by simply speaking to the individual concerned and/or the Childcare Operations Manager. The Setting is committed to open and regular dialogue with parents/carers and the Setting welcomes all comments on its services.

In the first instance, parents/carers are encouraged to speak directly to the relevant member of staff, if deemed appropriate. If not, the Childcare Operations Manager should be approached and they will try to resolve the problem. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be found, then Stage Two of the procedure will formally come into operation.

Stage Two

If informal discussions of a complaint or problem have not produced a satisfactory resolution to the situation, parents/carers should put their complaint in detail and in writing to the Smarties Childcare Operations Manager. Relevant names, dates, evidence, and any other important information on the nature of the complaint should be included. The Childcare Operations Manager should then inform the Chair of the Committee of the formal complaint.

If the Childcare Operations Manager has good reason to believe that the situation has child protection implications, they will contact the Local Safeguarding Children Board, according to the procedure set out in the Child Protection policy. If any party involved in the complaint has a good reason to believe that a criminal offence has been committed, then they will contact the police.

The Setting will acknowledge receipt of the complaint as soon as possible - within three working days at least - and fully investigate the matter within 15 working days. If there is any delay, the Setting will advise the parent/carer of this and offer an explanation. The Childcare Operations Manager will be responsible for sending them a full and formal response to the complaint.

The formal response to the complaint in writing from the Setting will be sent to the parent/carer concerned and copied to all relevant members of staff if appropriate. The response will include recommendations for dealing with the complaint and for any amendments to the Setting's policies or procedures emerging from the investigation.



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The Childcare Operations Manager will arrange a time to meet the parent/carer concerned and any other relevant individuals, such as members of staff, to discuss the complaints and the Setting's response to it. The Childcare Operations Manager will judge if it is best for all parties to meet together or if individual meetings are more appropriate.

Stage Three

If at the conclusion of this process parents/carers remain dissatisfied with the response they have received, the original complaint along with the Setting's response will be passed to Chair of the Committee who will adjudicate the case.

The Committee will communicate a detailed response, including any actions to be taken, to both the Childcare Operations Manager and the parents/carers concerned within 15 working days.

Stage Four

If at the Stage 3 meeting the parent and setting cannot reach agreement, an external mediator may be 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.

The mediator keeps all discussion confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the Chair of the 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 Childcare Operations Manager and Chairperson of the 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), the Local Safeguarding Children Board 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.



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

Ofsted Registration Number: EY434661

Ofsted National Business Unit,

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street,

Manchester M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

These details are displayed on our setting's notice board.

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

In these cases, both the parent and our setting are informed and our manager work with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

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 when you registered your child at our setting. The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office,

Wycliffe House, Water Lane,

Wilmslow,

Cheshire,

SK9 5AF

Website address: www.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 for at least three years; including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in our Complaint Investigation Record, which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors to view on request.

This policy was adopted on:

13th June 2022

Date to be reviewed:

13th June 2025

Name of signatory:

Victoria Hutter

Role of signatory:

Chairman of the Committee

Signed:

13.06.22