

Complaints Policy

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

We aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We aim to offer a welcome to each individual child and family and to provide a warm and caring environment within which all children can learn and develop as they play. We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all the parties involved.

Methods

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure the outcome to which should be notified to the complainant within 28 days. All settings 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.

Raising a concern

- Any parent who has a concern but does not wish to raise a formal complaint should speak to the Playgroup Manager at an appropriate time and place to ensure confidentiality. The Playgroup Manager should log this concern on a Provider Concerns/ Complaints Record.
- The Playgroup Manager should deal with this concern and inform the parent what action has been taken. After two weeks the Playgroup Manager should meet with the parent to establish whether the parent is happy with the action taken or if they would like to raise a formal complaint.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks over, first of all, his/her worries and anxieties with the Playgroup Manager. If this is inappropriate due to the nature of the complaint the parent should contact the chair directly and /or Ofsted (see end of stage 4)
- A record of this complaint should be logged on a Provider Concerns/Complaints Record
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage. However, the Playgroup Manager must follow up this complaint after two weeks to ensure the complaint has been resolved and no further action is to be taken. This must be logged on the original Provider Concerns/Complaints Record.

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 setting manager and the chair of the management committee.
- The setting stores written complaints from parents together with the Provider Concerns/Complaints Record in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the Playgroup Manager 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 Playgroup Manager and/or chair of the management committee meet with the parent to discuss the outcome. Both parents and the manager should have a friend or partner present if required and agreed and a written record of the discussion should be made and stored in the summary log.

Stage 3

- If at the Stage 2 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.
- The mediator keeps all discussion confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (Playgroup Manager 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 4

- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the Playgroup Manager 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.

Records will be kept for at least 3 years.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

- 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 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
- The telephone number of Ofsted is: 0300 1231231
- These details are displayed on our setting's notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Area Safeguarding Children Committee in our local authority.
- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed, and the setting manager works with Ofsted or the Area Safeguarding Children Committee to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Records

- A record of complaints against our setting and/or the children and/or the adults working in our setting is kept in the children's own folders.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaints Summary Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Belton Playgroup Association:

Held on: 1st June 2026

Signed on behalf of committee:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Spencer', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Name and role of signatory: Anna Spencer, Chair of committee

Review date: April 2027