



5. Complaints Policy

- We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be resolved at an early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interests of St Peter's pre-school and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly, in a way that respects confidentiality.
- 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 believe children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community.
- We welcome suggestions on how to improve our group at any time.

Procedure

Making concerns known

- A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of St.Peter's pre-school should first of all talk over any worries and anxieties with the supervisor.
- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome within a couple of weeks, or if the problem recurs, the parent should put the concerns or complaint in writing and request a meeting with the supervisor and the chair of the committee. A written record of the discussion will be made and signed by all attendees.
- All complaints will be investigated and complainants will be notified of the outcome within 28 days of receipt of the complaint.

Most complaints should be resolved informally or at this initial stage.

- If the matter remains an issue, the parent should again contact the Chair.
- If the parent and setting cannot reach an agreement, an external mediator may be sought, one who is acceptable to both parties, to listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to clarify the situation.
- The mediator will keep all discussions confidential. S/he will meet with the group if requested and will keep an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice s/he has given.

A record of complaints will be kept for at least six years.



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The role of the registering authority

In rare circumstances, it may be necessary to bring in the local authority registration and inspection unit OFSTED, who have a duty to ensure laid down requirements are adhered to. The registering authority would be involved if a child appeared to be at risk or where there seemed to be a possible breach of registration requirements.

The contact details are:

OFSTED
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Our registration number is : **508013**

Dealing with allegations of abuse or poor practice against a member of staff

If an allegation of abuse or poor practice is made against a member of staff, the committee will consider the nature of the allegation before making a decision on action to be taken.

Staff should be aware that options available from the registered provider may range from;

- A training need identified
- A verbal warning
- A written warning
- Suspension
- Dismissal in situations of gross misconduct, following an investigation.

If a member of staff is suspended, the employer should continue paying a full salary to the member of staff whilst an investigation takes place.

Whistle Blowing

This Whistleblowing policy is intended to cover genuine concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures. That concern may be about something that:

- Is against the policies and procedures of the preschool
- Falls below established standards of practice.
- Amounts to improper conduct
- Is a Health and Safety risk, including risks to the public as well as children, colleagues, parents/carers and others
- Contributes to a safeguarding risk involving children in the preschool care.



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Procedures

The first step is to report the concern to the Supervisor. This may, however depend upon the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of any wrongdoing. If you believe that the Supervisor is involved you should take your concerns to the Chair of the Preschool Committee.

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing, and will be treated in confidence. Staff who wish to make a written report are advised to set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places, where possible and the reasons for the disclosure.

In order to protect a member of staff who raises a concern and those accused of wrong-doing, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and if so, what form it should take. Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation.

If urgent action is required this will be taken before any investigation is conducted.

Staff will be told how the preschool proposes to deal with a concern within 10 working days of the issue being raised. The preschool will make every effort not to reveal the identity of anyone raising a concern.

If an allegation is not confirmed by the investigation but made in good faith then no action will be taken against the complainant, however if a member of staff makes an allegation maliciously for personal gain then they may be subject to disciplinary action.

You must not:

- Investigate the matter yourself.
- Alert those suspected of being involved
- Tell anyone other than the designated persons

External bodies to which a concern can be reported:

- Ofsted (if the concern is about the safe and efficient running of the setting) – 0300 123 1231 or Email whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk
- The Local Authority Designated Officer or the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (if the concern is a child protection issue). 01635 503090
- The police (if a crime is thought to have been committed).
- The Whistleblowing charity PCAW (Public concern at work) for advice.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the Pre-school held on (Date):

Signed on behalf of the Pre-school: (Chairperson)