



COMPLAINTS POLICY

PRINCIPLES

The Nursery has an open door policy to welcome parents and carers at all times. Our ethos is one of accountability, communication and transparency in order to engender and maintain trust with parents and carers, which is vital for a successful nursery.

We constantly strive to provide an environment that operates at a high standard and is also held in high regard within the community. To that end, we work in partnership with parents/carers and outside agencies and we welcome any comments or suggestions that will help us to improve.

We understand that from time to time, there may be occasions when issues become sufficiently important that an escalation is required. It is therefore the responsibility of Nursery Management to ensure that parents/carers have clear access to information that will assist this need.

The purpose of this policy is to clarify how complaints and escalation procedures can be made in a confidential, transparent and effective way. In addition, where the complainant is a member of staff, they may refer to the Nursery Grievance Procedures and the Whistleblowing Policy.

ESCALATION PROCEDURES

The following procedures apply:

INFORMAL RESOLUTION

- In the first instance a parent/carer would discuss any concerns with the individual member of staff caring for their child, typically the key person or Room Leader.
- The next point of escalation is the Nursery Manager or Deputy Manager who will deal with the situation in a timely manner. Emails may be sent to the nursery in confidence using the address (hello@lodgeadaynursery.co.uk).
- All complaints and escalations are confidential and all information is recorded in The Lodge 'Concerns folder'.

The person you contact will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they are received. Should the matter not be resolved within two weeks, or in the event that the School and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then you will be advised to proceed with your complaint at a formal level.

FORMAL RESOLUTION

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then you should put your complaint in writing to the Head of the Prep, who will consult the Headmaster and will decide the appropriate course of action to

take. The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as required of the school by Schedule 1 Part 7 paragraph 25(k) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2010; which provide that correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under Section 162A of the 2002 Act requests access to them.

In most cases the Head of Prep will arrange a meeting with you, normally within 7 days of receiving the complaint (although this timescale is subject to change during any of the School holidays), to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. If not, it may then be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations. Once he is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and you will be informed of this in writing. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision. If you are still not satisfied with the decision you should request a hearing of the Complaints Panel. Your request should be submitted in writing, within one month of the Headmaster's decision, detailing the particulars of the complaint, the evidence you wish to present to the Panel and the remedy that you seek.

COMPLAINTS PANEL

The Panel will be appointed by the Management Committee of the Governors and will normally consist of two Governors who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and one person who is independent of the management and running of the School. The Chairman of the Panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 days although the Panel will not normally sit during any of the School holidays.

If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 5 days prior to the hearing.

You may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person who may be a relative, teacher or friend. Please inform the Chairman of the Panel in advance who will be accompanying you. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

If possible the Panel will resolve your complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts it considers relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete normally within 7 days of the Hearing.

The Panel will inform you of its decision, the reasons for it and any recommendations by electronic mail (if appropriate) in the first instance, with copies to the Headmaster, Governors and, where relevant, the person complained about. Original documents will also be sent to you by first class post, and copies of those documents will be available for inspection on the School premises by Governors and the Headmaster. The decision of the Panel will be final.

The above timings are for guidance. It is expected that all complaints will normally reach resolution within 28 days.

DFE Regulations require the School to state the number of complaints registered under the formal Complaints Procedure in the preceding year: one complaint was registered under the formal procedure in the year 2016-17. Parents may request (from the Headmaster) the number of complaints during 2015-16 if they wish to do so.

The Nursery operates a self-reporting policy with regulatory bodies, and may deem it appropriate to disclose the incident to Ofsted and / or the Local Authority. The parent / carer will also be provided with the option to escalate to Ofsted and / or the Local Authority in accordance with their wishes.

In addition to reporting the incident to regulatory bodies, the Nursery may deem it appropriate to take disciplinary action internally. Parents / carers will be informed where such action has been taken such that full accountability is maintained.

ESCALATION TO OFSTED

Our Nursery is registered with Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills). In the event that the issue cannot reasonably be dealt with internally, the Governors, Nursery Manager and / or the Parents / Carers can raise formal complaints to Ofsted as follows:

The National Complaints Team, Ofsted
National Business Unit, Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street,
Manchester, M1
2WD.
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk. Tel: 0300 123 4666.
Our Ofsted Registration Number: EY553256

When Ofsted receives either a self-reported complaint from the setting or an escalation from parents/carers the following will normally apply:

- The complaint / escalation will usually be registered within 5 working days.
- Ofsted will investigate and submit a response within 20 working days of the initial contact.
- It may be decided that Ofsted will visit the childcare setting for further discussions.
- It may be decided that Ofsted will invite the parents/carers to a meeting.
- A decision will be made and the parents/carers will be informed.
- Dependent on the circumstances, Ofsted may (1) close the setting (2) suspend services at the setting (3) amend the Ofsted inspection rating (4) record the incident on its web site (5) provide the setting with a list of mandatory actions to implement within a given period (6) decide no action is necessary.
- Ofsted will also provide details of how to appeal if the complainant is not satisfied with the response.

The Nursery keeps a complaints register in the Manager's office which is available for inspection by staff, parents and visitors as appropriate.

ESCALATION TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

In the event of a safeguarding issue, parents/cares or the setting may notify The Local Authority Designated Person (LADO).

Local Authority Designated Officers can be contacted via email on LADOCentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk or using the LADO central telephone number 0300 123 2044, for allegations against all staff and volunteers.

This service combines roles and functions that were previously discharged by the Children's Social Care Referrals & Assessment Team.

When an allegation is made against a member of staff the Local Authority Designated Officer, LADO, should be the first point of contact and then Ofsted.

Amended: March 2020