

Complaints Policy and Procedures

Introduction

At Putnoe Woods we believe that children deserve the best opportunities to reach their full potential and achieve the outcomes that are key to children's wellbeing.

These are:

- Stay Safe
- Be Healthy
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a positive Contribution
- Achieve Economic Well Being

We are committed to providing a safe, stimulating, consistent and accessible service to the children in our care and their parents and carers.

Putnoe Woods recognises that whilst aiming to achieve the highest standards of quality care, education and services for everyone and the need to foster positive partnerships with families, we are in acceptance that on occasion circumstances may lead to parents or carers wishing to make either a formal or an informal complaint.

Putnoe Woods believe and makes a commitment to reflect on their practices continually and wishes to ensure that all complaints and concerns are dealt with professionally and promptly and to make resolutions and endeavour these circumstances are corrected.

It is imperative that the Management Team and all Early Years Educators develop and maintain positive relationships with parents and carers so they can confidently raise any concerns or complaints that can be discussed, investigated and resolved and as to ensure that the welfare of the child remains paramount and is safeguarded.

The Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- 1.1 It is hoped that most concerns and complaints will be resolved quickly and informally
- 1.2 If a parent/carer has a complaint about some aspect of Putnoe Woods Preschool 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 Manager
- 1.3 Putnoe Woods is committed to open and regular dialogue with parents/carers and welcomes all comments on its services
- 1.4 In the first instance, parents/carers are encouraged to speak directly to the relevant member of staff, key person or Team Leader if deemed appropriate. If not, the Manager (or Deputy Manager) should be approached, and they will try to resolve the problem
- 1.5 If concerns are raised to the child's key person, the key person must also notify the Preschool Manager
- 1.6 In many cases, the matter will be resolved quickly by this means to the parents' satisfaction
- 1.7 If a satisfactory resolution cannot be found, then Stage Two of the procedure will formally come into operation
- 1.8 Any complaints regarding financial matters must be addressed to the Business and finance Manager
- 1.9 Complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are taken very seriously and may need to be dealt with at Stage 2 without action at Stage 1

Stage Two – Formal Resolution

- 1.10 If informal discussions of a complaint or problem have not produced a satisfactory resolution to the situation, parents/carers must put their complaint in detail and in writing to the Manager of Putnoe Woods Preschool. Relevant names, dates, evidence, and any other important information on the nature of the complaint should be included
- 1.11 If the Preschool Manager has good reason to believe that the situation has Safeguarding implications, they will contact the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- 1.12 Putnoe Woods Preschool 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
- 1.13 If there is any delay, the preschool will advise the parent/carer of this and offer an explanation. The Preschool Manager will be responsible for sending them a full and formal response to the complaint.
- 1.14 The formal response to the complaint in writing from the Preschool Manager will be sent to the parent/carer concerned and copied to all relevant members of staff if appropriate
- 1.15 The response will include recommendations for dealing with the complaint and for any amendments to Putnoe Woods policies or procedures emerging from the investigation

- 1.16 Putnoe Woods 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 Preschool Manager will judge if it is best for all parties to meet together or if individual meetings are more appropriate
- 1.17 Written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint will be kept by the Preschool Manager or person carrying out the investigation

Stage Three

- 1.18 If at the conclusion of this process parents/carers remain dissatisfied with the response they have received, the original complaint along with the Preschool's response will be passed to the Chair of Trustees
- 1.19 The Chair of Trustees will thoroughly investigate the complaint with the Preschool Manager and any other members of staff whom may be involved
- 1.20 The Chair of Trustees will communicate a detailed response, including any actions to be taken, to both the Preschool Manager and the parents/carers concerned within 15 working days
- 1.21 Written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint will be kept by the Chair of Trustees

Stage Four

- 1.22 If, after discussion, the complainant is not satisfied, then he/she should contact Ofsted

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street,
Manchester,
M1 2WD
Tel: 0300 123 1231
Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/childcare
- 1.23 Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure
- 1.24 In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the Preschool's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering

and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to

- 1.25 If a child appears to be at risk, we will follow the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board in our local authority as we are required to do

Documentation

- 1.26 A record of complaints against Putnoe Woods and/or the children and/or the adults working in our Preschool is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed
- 1.27 An agreed written record of complaints will be taken of the main discussions, and decision taken and /or agreed action(s) for all complaints within the formal stages
- 1.28 All of those present at the meeting should sign the record and receive a copy of it
- 1.29 This confidential record of complaints and outcomes of all formal complaints will be made available for Ofsted inspectors on their request
- 1.30 All records are kept for at least 3 years

Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.31 The Preschool Manager, Deputy Manager, Team Leader or Key Person must make parents aware of Putnoe Woods Preschool Complaints Policy and Procedures during their settling in visits
- 1.32 A copy of the Concerns and Complaints Procedure must be displayed on the parents notice board
- 1.33 A copy of Ofsted's Parent Poster must be displayed on the notice board

Confidentiality

- 1.34 Personal information regarding children, families and staff must be kept securely in the locked cabinet in the office
- 1.35 To ensure the privacy and confidentiality on any such information consideration must be given to who needs to know, when and where information is shared with parents and outside agencies
- 1.36 Parents are required to complete a Consent to Share Information Form during the registration process
- 1.37 Any concerns or complaints made against the Preschool Manager or Business and Finance Manager must be raised to the Chair of Trustees



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This policy is in compliance with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) May 2018

Putnoe Woods is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, employees, students, volunteers, trustees and parents and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Date of Policy: September 2015	Created By: Jo Skelton	
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Review Date	Reviewer	Amendments	Policy signed off on behalf of the Board of Trustees
May 2018	Jo Skelton	GDPR statement added	
January 2019	Trustees Jo Skelton		Jan 2019
November 2019	Nikki Adams	New email address	
November 2021	Jo Skelton		
January 2022	Jo Skelton		
November 2022	Nikki Adams	GDPR replaced by Data Protection	
Sept 2023	Jo Skelton		
Jan 2024	Jo Skelton	Added 'at least 3 years'	
Dec 2025	Nikki Adams	None	

Putnoe Woods Complaints Record

Date of complaint:			
A: Source of complaint			
Parent (in writing, including email) ⁵	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff member	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent (in person)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anonymous	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent (phone call)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ofsted (include complaint number if known)	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>
B: Nature of complaint			
(please tick all boxes that the complaint relates to)			
EY Register		Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare	<input type="checkbox"/>	Documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Suitable people	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning and Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Suitable premises, environment and equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Compulsory Register	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Voluntary Register	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please give details of the complaint:			

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⁵ Regulations require providers to investigate all complaints notified to them, in writing, by a parent of a child attending the setting.

C: How it was dealt with		
Internal investigation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Investigation by Ofsted	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Investigation by other agencies (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Please give details of any internal investigation or attach any outcome letter from Ofsted:		
D: Actions and outcomes		
Internal actions	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Actions agreed with Ofsted	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Changes to conditions of registration	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other action taken by Ofsted	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No action	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Actions imposed or agreed with other agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Please give details:	
Has a copy of this record been shared with parents?	Yes / No
Name of recorder:	Outcome notified to parent: Yes (within 28 days for EY Register) ⁶ (within 20 days for Voluntary/Compulsory Register) ⁷ Date:
Position: Name: Signature:	Date Completed:

⁶ Regulations require providers to give an account of the findings of the investigation into the complaint and any action taken to the parent who made the complaint, within 28 days of the date of the complaint for the Early Years Register and ⁷within 20 days of the date of the complaint for the Voluntary and Compulsory Childcare Register.

How to complete the complaints record

You are not required to use this complaints record. If you wish to use a different form it must include all of the information held in this record. Ofsted will check your complaints record at all inspections from October 2005.

When completing the record you should bear in mind it must be shared with any parent who asks to see it as well as with Ofsted. It is important to maintain appropriate confidentiality when filling in the record. This means that you should not name the person making the complaint or any persons (adults and children) that relate to the complaint.

Source of complaint

You need to record here who made the complaint. Where people complain to Ofsted, we will normally refer all such complainants to you in the first instance. Where Ofsted carries out an investigation into your continued suitability to provide childcare following a complaint, we will tell you of the outcome of our investigation. Where we do this, you should enter Ofsted as the source and the Ofsted complaint number, if known.

Nature of complaint

The record is intended only for complaints relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage. You must record here one or more of the welfare requirements to which the complaint refers. If you are unsure, you should refer to your EYFS pack. You must record all details associated with the complaint, taking care not to name individuals. For example, use 'child A', staff member B'.

How it was dealt with

You must provide information on how you investigated the complaint. You will need to record:

- The process that you took to ensure that the complaint was fully investigated, such as interviews, reviews of records
- who was involved in the investigation without identifying any individuals names in the complaint, including staff or any child
- any referrals you made to an external agency, for example local authority environmental health departments or social services.

Actions and outcomes

You must provide details about the outcome of your investigation. You will need to record:

- Any action(s) identified by you
- Any actions set or taken by Ofsted
- Any action taken by another external agency, where you have their permission to do so
- The outcome of your investigation, identifying any areas where you feel you could make improvement to your provision
- If you dismissed any members of staff following the investigation and if so, under what circumstances. If you have dismissed a member of staff for misconduct, because they placed a child at risk of significant harm, you may need to refer the individual for inclusion onto the Protection of Children Act (POCA) list. You can find out how to do this by ringing Ofsted on 08456 404040.

You must share an account of the findings of your investigation and the actions, if any, that you took or you intend to take as a result of your investigations with the parents who made the complaint, and at the request of any parent of a child in your care at the setting. You must do this within 20 or 28 days from the date the complaint was made, dependent upon under which register the child sits. You can do this by sharing this record. If they ask you to do so, or if you think it is appropriate, you should send a separate letter to the parent who made the complaint, giving more detail.