

Making a Complaint

Policy statement

We believe that children and parents should receive a high quality of service and care when attending to their needs. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our setting and will address any concerns about the running of the setting in a prompt and considered manner. Whilst most concerns can be resolved quickly, through an informal approach with the Preschool Manager, we acknowledge the need for parents/carers to escalate any concerns they may have, should they feel the informal approach has not adequately addressed their concerns.

Procedures

All settings are required to keep a written record of any complaints that reach stage two and above, and their outcome. This is to be made available to parents/carers, as well as to Ofsted inspectors on request. A full procedure is set out in the *Complaint Investigation Record* which acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any person who has a concern about an aspect of our setting's provision must raise their concerns with our Preschool Manager who will aim to address their concerns at this first point of contact.
- The Preschool Manager records the issue, and how it was resolved, in the child's file.

Stage 2

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, or if the problem recurs, they can put their concerns in writing to the Preschool Manager, or if the complaint is about the manager, to the Nominated Individual.
- For parents/carers who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints in the Complaint Investigation Record; the form may be completed by the Preschool Manager and signed by the parent.

- Our setting stores all information relating to written complaints from parents/carers in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the Preschool 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 Preschool Manager meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- We inform parents/carers of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of him/her making the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, we log the summative points in our Complaint Investigation Record, which is made available to Ofsted on request.

Stage 3

- If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the General Manager. The parent/carer may have a friend or partner present if they prefer and our manager should have the support of the management team.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made, as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All of the parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, we log the summative points in our Complaint Investigation Record. If no consensus is reached the complainant can proceed to stage 4.

Stage 4

- If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Nominated Individual and/or Board Member. The parent/carer may have a friend or partner present if they prefer and our representative should have the support of the management team or Board.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made, as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All of the parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, we log the summative points in our Complaint Investigation Record. If no consensus is reached the complainant can proceed to stage 5.

Stage 5

- If at the stage four meeting the parent/carer cannot reach agreement with us, we invite an external mediator 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 us to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.

- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with our staff 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.
- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent/carers and General Manager 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 Nominated Individual

- The role of the nominated individual is a strategic position requiring oversight, responsibility and overarching accountability either singularly or jointly with others, for the application and registration on behalf of the registered body. They are able to act with authority, across the setting, on the organisation's behalf.
- Our Nominated Individual is a member of YMCA Taunton's Board of Trustees and takes an interested and active role in our setting. As such the Preschool Manager will advise the Nominated Individual immediately of any complaints regarding safeguarding and/or at the point of Ofsted being informed.
- The Nominated Individual may review any Complaints at any stage for monitoring purposes.

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/carers 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.
- Parents/carers can complain to Ofsted by telephone or in writing at:
 - 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/carers and setting are informed and our Preschool 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 or ico.org.uk
- The setting has a ‘whistle blowing’ policy in place that contains a full definition of the term including why, when and how to complain in this way, a copy can be provided upon request by the Preschool Manager.

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 by	YMCA Taunton Board of Trustees
On	Jan 2025
Date to be reviewed	Jan 2026