**Complaints Procedure**

**Statement of intent**

Our pre-school believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our pre-school and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the pre-school. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns.

**Aim**

We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our pre-school to a satisfactory conclusion for all the parties involved.

**Methods**

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure.

**How to complain**

Stage 1 – any parent who is uneasy about an aspect of the pre-school’s provision talks over, first, his/her worries and anxieties with the pre-school manager or the deputy manager

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 management. – Most complaints should be able to be resolved informally at Stage 1 or Stage 2.

Stage 3 – The parent requests a meeting with the manager. Both the parent and the Pre-School should have a friend or partner present if required. An agreed written record of the discussion is made. 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.

Stage 4 – If at the Stage 3 meeting the parent and pre-school 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. – Staff or volunteers are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators. – The mediator keeps all the discussion confidential. She/he can hold separate meetings with the pre-school management 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 they give.

Stage 5 – When the mediator has concluded their investigation, a final meeting between the parents, and the pre-school 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 mediators’ advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator is present at the meeting, if all parties think this will help and 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.

**Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Area Safeguarding Children Committee.**

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaint procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of our registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the statutory requirements of the EYFS are adhered to.

The address and telephone number of our Ofsted regional centre are:

**Early Years, Ofsted, NBU, 3rd Floor, Royal Exchange Buildings, St Ann’s Square, Manchester, M2 7LA. Telephone: 0300 123 1231**

If a child appears to be at risk, our pre-school follows the procedure of the Local Area Safeguarding Committee.

In these cases, both the parent and the pre-school are informed, and the pre-school management works with Ofsted or the Area Safeguarding Committee to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint followed by appropriate action.

**Records**

A record of complaints against this pre-school and /or the children and/or the adults working in this setting is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.