



The Parish Centre  
Glebe Way  
Chesham Bois  
Amersham  
Bucks HP6 5ND  
01494 433426  
[maryland@stleonardscb.org.uk](mailto:maryland@stleonardscb.org.uk)

Mon-Tues 9am-12pm  
Wed-Fri 9am-2.30pm

## **Complaints policy**

### **Policy Statement**

Maryland Pre-School aims to provide the highest quality of education and care for all our children. We aim 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, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our Pre-School at any time, and we will give quick and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the Pre-School.

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 the Pre-School and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.

### **Aim**

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

### **Methods**

To achieve this, we operate the following Complaints Procedure.

### **Complaints Procedure**

#### **Stage 1**

Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the Pre-School provision talks over his/her worries and anxieties with either the child's Key Person, the Pre-School Manager or any member of the management committee. Any parent who requires a written response to their concerns should request one at this stage. Maryland Pre-School keeps a 'Complaint Summary Record' of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond. This is available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors.

#### **Stage 2**

If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves on by making a formal complaint in writing to the Pre-School Manager or the management committee, who will investigate the complaint. Relevant names, dates, evidence and any other important information on the nature of the complaint should be included. The complainant can expect a written reply in acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint, as well as some indication of how and when the complaint



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will be addressed within 5 working days.

The Pre-School Manager or committee will fully investigate the matter and a response will be given within 15 working days. If there is any delay, the Pre-School will advise the parent/carers of this and offer an explanation. The Manager or committee will be responsible for ensuring that a full and formal response to the complaint is made within 28 days of the complaint being made and will inform the complainant in writing of the outcome.

The Manager or committee will arrange a time to meet the parent/carer concerned and any other relevant individuals, such as members of staff, to discuss the complaint and the Pre-School's response to it. They will judge if it is best for all parties to meet together or if individual meetings are more appropriate.

If the complaint is resolved at this stage, the complaint is logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

### **Stage 3**

If the person who made the complaint is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, they should contact the Manager to arrange a meeting. The complainant should have a friend or partner present if required and the Manager should ensure the Chair of the Management Committee, Andrea Hayers, is present. The meeting will review the action made so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.

An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decisions or actions to be taken. If an agreement is reached, all of the parties present at the meeting must sign the record and receive a copy of it.

The signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the complaint is logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

### **Stage 4**

If at stage 3 the parent and the setting cannot reach an agreement an external mediator is invited to help 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 define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways it may be resolved.

(Staff or volunteers within the Pre-School Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators).



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The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the Pre-School staff (Pre-School Manager and Chair of the Management Committee) and the complainant, 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.

### **Stage 5**

When the mediator concludes her/his investigations, a final meeting between the complainant, the Pre-School Manager and the Chair of the Management Committee 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. When the complaint is resolved, the complaint is logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

### **The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board**

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of the complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the Pre-Schools 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.

The number to call Ofsted with regard to a complaint is: 0300 123 1231

These details are displayed on our setting's notice board.

**If there have been any concerns or allegations against a person who works or volunteers within our setting, refer to our safeguarding policy.**

### **Records**

A record of complaints against Maryland Pre-school and/or the children and/or the adults working in our Pre-School is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.



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The outcome of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond is recorded in the Complaints Summary Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request. To protect the confidentiality of all children at our setting a duplicate Summary Record will be kept with the names of children not displayed for the purposes of showing parents only.

**At all stages of the process due care will be taken by all individuals to keep the proceedings confidential, and a written record of meetings and advice given will be kept.**

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Maryland Preschool	name of setting
Held on	November 2018	(date)
Date to be reviewed	November 2019	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	Andrea Hayers	
Name of signatory	Andrea Hayers	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	Chairperson	