

A. Complaints Procedure

Statement of intent

We believe that children and parents/carers are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how we can improve and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of Welford 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 Welford Pre-school to a satisfactory conclusion for all parties involved.

Methods

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure. We keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage 2 or beyond. This is to be made available to parents/carers, as well as to OFSTED inspectors. A full procedure is set out in the Pre-school Learning Alliance publication 'Complaints Summary Record'.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of Welford Pre-school's provision, first of all, talks over their worries and anxieties with the Manager.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent/carer moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the Manager and the management committee.
- For parents/carers who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints in the above-mentioned publication; the form may be completed with the person in charge and signed by the parent/carer.
- Welford Pre-school stores written complaints from parents/carers in the Complaints File
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Manager meets with the parent/carer to discuss the outcome.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the conclusions are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they may request a meeting with the Manager and a representative of the management committee. The parent/carer may have a friend or partner present if required and the Manager should have the support of a representative of the management committee.

- 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, the conclusions are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If at the Stage 3 meeting, the parent/carer and Welford Pre-school cannot reach 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 to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.
- Staff or volunteers within the Pre-school Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussion confidential. They can hold separate meetings with Welford Pre-school personnel (Manager representative of the management committee) and the parent/carer, if this is considered 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 investigations, a final meeting between the parent/carer, the Manager and a representative 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 is made of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken. 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 Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (OFSTED) and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

- Parents/carers may approach OFSTED directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of Welford Pre-school's registration requirements, it is essential to involve OFSTED as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the National Standards for Day Care are adhered to.
- They may be contacted by phone on 0300 123 1231 or emailed at enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
- These details are displayed on Welford Pre-school's notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board in our local authority.
- In these cases, both the parent/carer and Welford Pre-school are informed and the Manager works with OFSTED or the Local Safeguarding Children's Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Records

- A record of complaints against Welford Pre-school and/or the children and/or the adults working in Welford Pre-school is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaints Summary Record, which is available for parents/carers and OFSTED inspectors on request.

Date reviewed	17/10/2025
This policy was adopted at a meeting of Welford Pre-school held on	23/10/2025
Signed on behalf of the Committee	
Role of signatory	Chair