



# Testwood Baptist Church Pre-school

Please see also: Safeguarding, Data Protection

## COMPLAINTS

### Policy Statement

As a member of the Early Years Alliance, we aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We aim to offer a welcome to each individual child and family and 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 and a positive conclusion to any issues raised. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community generally and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our group at any time.

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out 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.

Many concerns can be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, the following procedures should be used.

### Making a complaint:

#### Stage 1

- Any parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the group's provision should initially talk over any worries and anxieties with the Pre-school Manager. Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- We will record the issue, and how it was resolved, in the child's file.

#### Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome within a couple of weeks, or if the problem recurs, parents should put their concerns or complaint in writing to the Pre-School Manager or a member of the Management Team. This can be done via email.
- Written complaints from parents will be stored in the child's personal file, however if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, all information relating to it may be stored in a separate file.
- When the investigation into a complaint is completed, the Pre-school Manager will meet with the parent to discuss the outcome. This will happen within 28 days of the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, a log is recorded in the Complaints Folder, which is made available to Ofsted on request.

#### Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Pre-School Manager and the Management Team. Both the parents and the Pre-School Manager should have a friend or partner (representative) present if required.
- 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.
- If the matter is resolved at this stage, it is then logged in the Complaints folder.

#### Stage 4

- If the matter is still unresolved, parents will be advised to contact a member of the Management Team. At this point, if parents and group cannot reach agreement, we invite an external mediator, one who is acceptable to both parties, to 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 Early Years Alliance will be available to act as mediator if both parties wish it.
- The mediator will keep all discussion confidential. She/he will meet with the group if requested and will keep an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice s/he has given.

## Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between parents, the setting and the Chair of the Management Team 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 can be present 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 signs the record and receives a copy of it. The signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

### *The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), the Local Safeguarding Children Board or local safeguarding partners and the Information Commissioner's Office*

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of the complaints procedure, especially where there seems to be a possible breach of the settings registration requirements. Then it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registration and inspection body ensuring the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
- Parents can complain to Ofsted by telephone or in writing at:

Ofsted National Business Unit, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M12WD

Helpline: 0300 1231231

- If a child appears to be at risk, we will follow the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) or local safeguarding partners.
- In these cases, both the parent and the setting are informed and the Pre-school Manager as well as the Chairperson of the Management Team will work with Ofsted or the LSCB or local safeguarding partners to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by the 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 the concern at pre-school. For further information about how we handle your data, please see the Privacy Notice. The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or [ico.org.uk](http://ico.org.uk).

## Records

- All settings are required to keep a written record of any complaints that reach stage 2 and above, and their outcome. This is to be made available to parents, as well as to Ofsted inspectors on request. A full procedure is set out in the *Complaint Investigation Record* (Early Years Alliance 2015) which acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose.
- A record of complaint against our Pre-school and/or the children and/or the adults working there is kept for at least three years, including the date, the circumstances and how the complaint was managed.

This Procedure relates to the Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare section of the EYFS Statutory Framework.

Agreed by Pre-school Management Team:

Signed:

Date:

Review Date: Autumn 2025