



# Happy Hands Pre-School Playgroup

making learning fun for over 30 years!

## Complaints Policy

June 2010

### Statement of Intent

We believe that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their need and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our setting and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the setting. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the Manager or Deputy Manager. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns.

### Complaints Procedure

All settings are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage 2 or beyond. This is to be available to parents/carers as well as Ofsted inspectors.

### Making a complaint

#### Stage 1

Any parent/carer who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks it over 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 should put the concerns or complaint in writing to the Manager and the Playgroup Chair.

For parents/carers who are not comfortable with making written complaints it may be recorded.

The setting stores written complaints in the child's personal file. Any information relating to an investigation may be stored in the Complaints File.

When the investigation is completed the Manager will meet with the parent/carer to discuss the outcome.



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When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged.

### Stage 3

If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they should request a meeting with the Manager and Chair. They should have a friend or partner present if required.

An agreed written record of the discussion should be made as well as of any decision or action to take as a result. All parties should sign the record and receive a copy of it.

When the complaint is resolved at this stage the summative points are logged.

### Stage 4

If the parent/carer and the setting cannot reach agreement, an external mediator is invited to help settle the complaint. This should be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice.

Staff or volunteers within the Pre-school Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to act as mediators.

The mediator has no legal powers. They must keep the discussions confidential. They may hold separate meetings with the parties involved. They must keep a written record of any meetings held and any advice given.

### Stage 5

When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between the parties 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 action to be taken, is made. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies the procedure has been concluded.



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### Role of Ofsted

Parents/carers may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of the complaints procedure. If 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 National Standards for Day Care are adhered to.

The address and phone number of the Ofsted regional centre are displayed on the settings notice board.

If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Area Safeguarding Children Committee in our local authority. In these cases both the parent/carer and the setting are informed and the Manager works with Ofsted and the Area Safeguarding Children Committee to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

### Records

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

The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaints File which is available to parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.