**MAKING A COMPLAINT POLICY.**

Cowling Preschool ensures that all concerns are dealt with promptly and efficiently, and if a complaint arises we will aim to resolve it quickly, fairly and to a satisfactory conclusion for all parties.

**Policy Statement.**

We believe 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 setting and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the setting. We anticipate 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. We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all the parties involved.

**Procedures.**

Stage 1.

* Any parent who has a concern talks over his/her concerns with the setting leader.
* Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2.

* If a satisfactory outcome is not reached, the parent should then put their concerns in writing to the setting leader and the chair of the management committee.
* A template can be provided for recording complaints (Preschool Learning Alliance; Summary Complaints Record) for any parent not comfortable with making written complaints.
* The setting stores written complaints from parents within the children’s personal file. However, if a detailed investigation is required, all information may be stored in a separate file designated for this complaint.
* When the investigation is complete, the Manager meets with the parents to discuss the outcome.
* Parents must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.
* When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3.

* If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, a meeting should be arranged with parent, Manager and Chair of the committee. The parent should have second person present if required.
* An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as ay 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.
* The signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4.

* If an agreement cannot be reached, 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 in which it may be resolved. Staff or volunteers within the Pre-School Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited as mediators.
* The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. They can hold separate meetings with setting personnel, and the parent. An agreed written record of any meetings that are held, and any advice given will be taken.
* When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between the parent, Manager and Chair of the committee will be held, along with the mediator. 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 make this conclusion.
* A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action 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 been concluded.

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to have been 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 that the Welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.

The number to call Ofsted with regard to a complaint is; 0300 1231231.

* These details are displayed on our notice board.
* If a child appears to be at risk, we follow the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board within the local authority.
* In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the manager works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by the appropriate action.

Records.

* A record of complaints against our setting and/or the children and/or the adults working in our setting 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 Summary Complaints Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

**This policy was adopted on .………………………………….......**

**Date to be reviewed ...…………………………………….**

**Signed on behalf of the management committee …………………………………………**

**Name of signatory …………………………………………**

**Role of signatory (e.g. Chair/owner) …………………………………………**