



Information and Records

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Making a complaint

Abbots Langley Pre-School must put in place a written procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents and/or carers.

10.12 Making a Complaint

Policy Statement

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

Procedures

Abbots Langley Pre-School is required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond (see below for explanation of stages). This is available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors to view. A full procedure is set out in the Pre-School Learning Alliance publication *Complaint Investigation Record (2012)* which acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose. Abbots Langley Pre-School has this book on the premises.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the Abbots Langley Pre-School's provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with the Pre-School leader or the owner of the Pre-School.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- We record the issue, and how it was resolved, in the child's file.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the Pre-School leader and the Pre-School owner.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints in the above-mentioned publication; the parent can ask for a copy of the form and complete it themselves or complete it with the help of the Pre-School leader or Pre-School owner.
- Abbots Langley Pre-School stores written complaints from parents in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the Pre-School leader may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Pre-School leader and/or Pre-School owner will meet with the parent 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 Investigation Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Pre-School owner. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the Pre-School owner should have the support of the Pre-School leader present.
- 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 summative points are logged in the Complaints Investigation Record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three meeting, the parent and Pre-School cannot reach agreement, an external mediator is invited to help to 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 discussions confidential. She or he can hold separate meetings with the Pre-School's leader and Pre-School owner. They can also hold separate meetings with the parent, if this is decided to be 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 his or her investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the Pre-School owner and the Pre-School leader 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.

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 this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the Pre-School's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Safeguarding and 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 Pre-School's notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board or local safeguarding partners.
- In these cases, both the parent and the Pre-School are informed and the Pre-School owner works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board or local safeguarding partners to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Records

- A record of complaints against Abbots Langley 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.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Summary Complaints Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

Abbots Langley Pre-School – Making a Complaint Policy

Other useful Pre-School Learning Alliance publications

- Complaints Investigation Record (2012)

This Policy was adopted at a meeting of Abbots Langley Pre-School held on	MARCH 2020
Date to be reviewed	MARCH 2022 OR SOONER IF CHANGES ARE REQUIRED
Provider	Pre-School Owner