

Bramble Bears – Making a Complaint

Policy statement

Bramble Bears Playgroup is committed to providing a safe, stimulating, consistent and accessible service to children and all families accessing the provision. We aim to provide high quality services for everyone. We believe that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt attention to their needs and wishes. Bramble Bears works in partnership to all families who access the setting and we welcome suggestions to improve. The management committee will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the setting.

Although we anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly, with an informal approach. 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. The supervisor will be responsible for managing any complaints made, unless the complaint is made against the manager and then the chairperson or an appointed committee member will investigate. All complaints made to staff will be recorded in detail on an incident form.

Our Complaints Policy is issued to all families as part of the registration process (within the welcome pack). It is also available upon request.

Where parents/carers are not satisfied that their child is receiving the free entitlement in the correct way (as set out in this funding agreement and in Early Education and Childcare Statutory guidance for local authorities), a complaint can be submitted directly to the playgroup supervisor. If your complaint relates to the provision of your child's funded entitlement (15 or 30 hours) and you are unable to resolve it by speaking to Bramble Bears then you can contact the Norfolk Family Information Service on 0344 800 8020 or email them at fis@norfolk.gov.uk.

We charge £1.00 per hour voluntary contributions fee which helps pay towards consumables, resources and activities such as cooking, crafts, snack etc... this is strictly voluntary and is not expected, parents only pay if they can afford to and wish to donate.

Procedures

Bramble Bears Playgroup is required to keep a written record 'summary log' of any/all complaints that reach stage two or beyond and their outcome. This is to be made available to

parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors on request. In the event of a complaint the following information will be recorded:

- The name of the person making the complaint
- The Early Years Foundation Stage requirement(s) relating to the complaint
- The nature of the complaint
- The date and time of the complaint
- Any action taken in response to the complaint
- The outcome of the investigation into the complaint
- Details and dates of the information and outcomes given to the complainant, including any action taken.

If I receive a formal written complaint I will inform Ofsted of this within 14 days.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision in the first instance should talk over his/her concerns with the relevant staff member. However, if deemed appropriate the manager should be approached to resolve the problem.

Bramble Bears is committed to open and regular dialogue with parents/carers and the pre-school welcomes all comments on its services, regardless of whether they are positive or negative. Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be found or if the problem recurs then the parent moves the complaint to stage 2.

Stage 2

The parent must put their concerns or complaint in writing to the setting's manager and the Chair of the management committee. Details of relevant names, dates, evidence and any other important information on the nature of the complaint should be included.

Bramble Bears will acknowledge receipt of the complaint as soon as possible, within three working days at least, and fully investigate the matter. If there is any delay, the setting will advise the parents/carers of this and offer an explanation.

The supervisor will be responsible for sending them a full and formal response to the complaint. If the supervisor has good reason to believe that the situation has child protection implications then Social Services will be contacted in accordance with our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy. If any party involved in the complaint has good reason to believe that a

criminal offence has been committed then the police will be contacted. The setting records written complaints from parents in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the setting's manager may wish to record all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.

When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the setting's supervisor 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. This formal response will include details of any actions taken, or to be taken, and any amendments to the Bramble Bears policies or procedures because of the investigation. A written record of the complaint and outcome will be kept for 3 years. This response will be sent to the parents/carers concerned and all relevant and appropriate staff. The supervisor will arrange a time to meet the parents/carers concerned and any other relevant individuals, such as members of staff, to discuss the complaint and the settings response to it. The supervisor will judge if it is best for all parties to meet together or if individual meetings are more appropriate.

When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summarised points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3

If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she can request a meeting with the setting's supervisor and the Chair of the management committee. The parent may have a friend or partner present if required and the manager should be supported by the Chair or another member of the management team.

An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All parties present at the meeting should 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 summarised points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

If at the stage three meeting the parent and setting 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. The mediator may be a member of staff from the PLA or Norfolk County Council.

The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. He/she can hold separate meetings with the

setting's personnel (setting's supervisor and Chair of the management committee) and 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 he/she gives.

Stage 5

When the mediator has concluded his/her investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the setting's supervisor and the Chair 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 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) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board: Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where 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 Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.

Staff issuing a complaint or appeal

If staff would like to issue a complaint, they need to follow the complaints procedure and speak to the supervisor or Chair. If they have an issue that they feel is needed to be reported to Ofsted, they can call or email them to issue their complaint.

Please follow relevant policies to your complaint/appeal or concern and read your contacts to seek the correct advice.

If the issue is not resolved or seek further advice about an employment complaint or appeal, please speak to ACAS who can answer your question on the legal side of employment and your rights. Also what steps and guidance your employers are following.

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1410>

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), the Local

Safeguarding Children Board 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 setting'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.
- Parents can complain to Ofsted by telephone or in writing at:

Ofsted National Business Unit, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231
- These details are displayed on our setting's notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, we follow the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- In these cases, both the parent and our setting are informed and our manager work with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by 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 your concern with us. For further information about how we handle your data, please refer to the Privacy Notice given to you when you registered your child at our setting. The ICO can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or ico.org.uk

Records

- A record of complaints in relation to our setting, or the children or the adults working in our setting, is kept for at least three years; including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in our Complaint Investigation Record, which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors to view on request.

The number to call Ofsted about a complaint is: 0300 123 1231, or write to them direct at:

Applications, Regulatory and Contact (ARC) Team

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester M1 2WD

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Bramble Bears	
Held on: april 2025	To be reviewed: April 2026
Signed by: (PRINT) Laura goss	Signature: lgoss
Role of Signatory: supervisor	