

Fairfield Playbox Pre-School

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Statement of intent

At Fairfield Playbox 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 preschool and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns.

We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate Preschool Leader. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns.

Aim

We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our preschool to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved, within a reasonable amount of time.

Methods

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure. All settings are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage 2 or beyond. This is to be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of Playbox's provision talks over, first of all, his/her worries and anxieties with the appropriate Leader.
- 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 can move to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the appropriate Leader or the chairperson of the management committee, c/o Kingston Methodist Church, Fairfield South, Kingston, Surrey KT1 2UJ.
- An investigation into the complaint is undertaken and when it is completed the preschool Leader or chairperson of the management committee meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the substantive points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.
- Playbox stores written complaints from parents in a separate file designated for this purpose.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the preschool leader and the chairperson of the management committee. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the leader should have the chairperson of the management committee, and, possibly, the other preschool leader, present. There may also be an additional person to take notes.
- 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 substantive points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If at the Stage 3 meeting the parent and Playbox 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 keeps all discussion confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the preschool personnel (leader/s 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 s/he gives.
- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the leader 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, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Area Safeguarding Children Committee.

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the preschool's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Early Years Foundation Stage Welfare Requirements are adhered to.

The address and telephone number of Ofsted are:

**Ofsted,
Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street,
Manchester M1 2WD
Telephone: 0300 123 1231
Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/parents
Our Ofsted Registration Number is: 131796**

The above details are displayed on the Playbox notice board.

- In cases where the nature of the complaint suggests that a child may have been harmed by a member of staff or volunteer at the Preschool, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) must be informed. The telephone number for the LADO is 020 8831 6008. Both the child's parent and the Management Committee are informed, and the Preschool leader works with the LADO and with any other agencies the LADO calls in, which might include the police or Ofsted, to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Records

- A record of complaints against Playbox and/or the children and/or the adults working in the preschool is kept. This includes the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaints Summary Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

This policy was last reviewed on 1.11.23

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee by Alan Clatworthy (Chair)

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Fairfield Playbox Pre-School

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Statement of intent

It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their parents and carers.

Aim

We aim to ensure that all parents, carers, Social Workers and other professionals can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of the children.

Methods

We keep records on children attending Playbox Preschool as follows:

- Personal records including registration and admission forms, signed consents, and other personal details recorded on a card index system. *We also keep records of fee payments or funding in the register, maintained by the Preschool Leaders.*
- We keep observations, planning records and 'Learning Journeys' on all children, written by their Key Workers.
- In some cases we also keep correspondence concerning the child or family; reports or minutes from meetings concerning the child from other agencies and observations by staff on any confidential matter involving the child, such as developmental concerns or child protection matters.
- Confidential documents are stored in a lockable cupboard and some may be stored electronically.
- Parents are strongly advised not to share information about Playbox children on social media.
- We abide by the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations and our Privacy Statement is displayed on the Playbox noticeboard.

Access to records:

- Parents can have access to the files and records of their own children but cannot have access to information about any other child.
- Staff will not share personal information given by parents with anyone, except other staff, professionals, or members of the Management Committee, and then only when it affects planning for the child's needs. Staff induction includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality.
- Volunteers and students are advised of our confidentiality policy, and required to respect it.

Other records

- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions (the Leaders and members of the Management Committee and the Church's Safeguarding Co-ordinator).

This policy was last reviewed on 1.11.23

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee by Alan Clatworthy (Chair)

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Fairfield Playbox Pre-School

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Children and Families

Statement of intent

Fairfield Playbox is committed to valuing diversity by providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families.

Aim

We aim to:

- provide a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued;
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and people with disabilities;
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity; and
- make inclusion a thread that runs through all preschool activities.

The legal framework for this policy is:

- Children Act 1989;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014

Methods

Admissions

Playbox is open to all members of the community.

- We advertise our service widely.
- We reflect the diversity of members of our society in our publicity and promotional materials.
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system.

- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our Equality and Diversity policy.
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to Playbox, on the basis of colour, ethnicity, religion or social background, such as being a member of a travelling community or an asylum seeker.
- We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our playgroup because of any disability.
- We develop an action plan to ensure that people with disabilities can participate successfully in the services offered by the preschool and in the curriculum offered.
- We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents. Displaying of openly racist insignia, distribution of racist material, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner.

Curriculum

Our preschool encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves. We encourage children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

We do this by:

- making children feel valued and good about themselves;
- ensuring that children have equality of access to learning;
- recognising the different learning styles of girls and boys, making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities;
- positively reflecting the widest possible range of communities in the choice of resources;
- avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of books or other visual materials;
- celebrating a range of festivals;
- creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
- helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable;
- ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities;
- ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning; and
- ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages.

Valuing diversity in families

- We recognise the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families.
- We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of the preschool and to contribute fully.
- For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to ensure their full inclusion.
- We offer a flexible payment system for families of differing means and offer information regarding sources of financial support.

Food

- We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met.
- We help children to learn about a range of food, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating, and to respect the differences among them.

This policy was last reviewed on 1.11.23

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee by Alan Clatworthy (Chair)

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Fairfield Playbox Pre-School

NON-COLLECTION OF CHILDREN POLICY

Statement of intent

If a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session, the preschool puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified practitioner who is known to the child.

Aim

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult, we will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

Methods

- Parents of children starting at Playbox Preschool are asked to provide specific information which is recorded on our Registration form, including:
 - home address and telephone number - if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, a mobile number or perhaps a neighbour or close relative;
 - place of work, address and telephone number (if applicable);
 - mobile telephone number wherever possible;
 - names, addresses and telephone numbers of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from Playbox, for example a childminder or grandparent (local contact in case of emergencies);
 - information about any person who does not have legal access to the child; and
 - who has parental responsibility for the child.
- On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be at home or in their usual place of work, they should tell the Leader, who will make a note of how they can be contacted on a card in our Box File.
- On occasions when parents or the persons normally authorised to collect the child are not able to collect the child, they should tell the Leader or member of staff responsible for the register that day, who will record the name and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child on our Daily Register clipboard. We agree with parents how to verify the identity of the person who is to collect their child.
- Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us so that we can begin to take back-up procedures. We provide parents with our contact telephone number. We also inform parents that - in the event that their children are not collected from Playbox by an authorised adult and the staff can no

longer supervise the child on our premises - we apply our child protection procedures as set out in our child protection policy.

- If a child is not collected at the end of the session, we follow these procedures:
 - The Daily Register Clipboard is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.
 - If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home, on their mobile telephone or at work.
 - If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the preschool - and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the Registration Card - are contacted.
 - All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents or nominated carers.
 - The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Card or on the Daily Register Clipboard.
 - The Leader and one other member of staff stay with the child until he/she is collected by an authorised adult.
 - If no-one collects the child after one hour and there is no-one who can be contacted to collect the child, we contact Kingston Social Services (*Single Point of Access – SPA*) Telephone number 0208 547 5008
 - The child stays at Playbox in the care of the two members of staff until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a social worker;
 - Social services will aim to find the parent or relative if they are unable to do so, the child will be admitted into the care of the local authority.
 - Under no circumstances will staff go to look for the parent, nor will they take the child home with them.
 - A full written report of the incident is recorded in the Incident Book.
 - Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by our staff.
 - Ofsted may be informed (telephone number: 0300 123 1231).

This policy was last reviewed and revised on 1.11.23

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee by Alan Clatworthy (Chair)

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Fairfield Playbox Pre-School

SETTLING-IN POLICY

Statement of intent

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy at Playbox and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well being and their role as active partners with the preschool.

Aim

We aim to make Playbox a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

Methods

- Before a child starts to attend the preschool, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include our Website, our 'Information and Acceptance Letter', the offer letter and the 'Information about our Preschool' leaflet.
- Whenever possible, we also provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the preschool before starting at Playbox. They may also have visited our Stay and Play sessions.
- We use pre-start visits and the first session at which a child attends to explain and complete with his/her parents the child's registration records and to talk about the curriculum and answer any questions.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle. The child's Key Worker is introduced to the child and parent and helps in the settling-in process.
- Younger children may take longer to settle in, as may children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent to be on hand to re-settle them.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their Key Worker, the leader or another member of staff or volunteer; for example the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when. For example: "I'll be back after Song Time".

- We do not believe that leaving a child distressed for a period of time will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and getting the best from the preschool. We may ring the parent or carer and ask them to return to collect their child.

This policy was last reviewed on 1.11.23

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee by Alan Clatworthy (Chair)

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