

Ramillies Hall Nursery & Holiday Club

Complaints Policy and Procedure



1. Aims

Ramillies Hall prides itself on the quality of care it provides. We welcome suggestions for improving our provision and all needs and wishes will also be considered, however, we recognise that sometimes things can go wrong and if parents do have a complaint, we offer assurance that it will be treated seriously, confidentiality and in accordance with the following procedure.

When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response
- Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality
- Treat complainants with respect
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process
- Consider how the complaint can feed into the improvement evaluation processes

We try to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed.

We aim to give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full.

To support this, we will ensure we publicise the existence of this policy and make it available on the Nursery website.

2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements addresses duties set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, with regards to dealing with complaints about our fulfilment of Early Years Foundation Stage requirements.

3. Definitions and scope

The DfE guidance explains the difference between a concern and a complaint.

A **concern** is defined as “an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought”.

We will resolve concerns through day-to-day communication as far as possible.

A **complaint** is defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action”.

We intend to resolve complaints informally where possible, at the earliest possible stage.

There may be occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. This policy outlines the procedure relating to handling such complaints.

This policy does not cover complaints procedures relating to:

- Admissions
- Safeguarding matters
- Whistle-blowing

- Staff grievances
- Staff discipline

Please see our separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaint.

Complaints about services provided by other providers who use Nursery premises or facilities should be directed to the provider concerned.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidential. You can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you, or your child, raises in good faith.

4. Principles for investigation

When investigating a complaint, we will try to clarify:

- What has happened
- Who was involved
- What the complainant feels would put things right

We also intend to address complaints as quickly as possible. To achieve this, realistic and reasonable time limits will be set for each action within each stage.

Where further investigations are necessary, new time limits will be set, and the complainant will be sent details of the new deadline with an explanation for the delay.

The Nursery expects that complaints will be made as soon as possible after an incident arises and no later than 3 months afterwards. We will consider exceptions to this time-frame in circumstances where there were valid reasons for not making a complaint at that time and the complaint can still be investigated in a fair manner for all involved.

5. Complaints about our fulfilment of Early Years requirements

We will investigate all written complaints relating to the Nursery's fulfilment of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, and notify the complainant of the outcome within 28 days of receiving the complaint. The Nursery will keep a record of the complaint (see section 9) and make this available to Ofsted on request.

Parents and carers can notify Ofsted if they believe that the Nursery is not meeting Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, by calling 0300 123 4234 or 0300 123 4666, or by emailing enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk. An online contact form is also available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted#org-contacts>

We will notify parents and carers if we become aware that the Nursery is to be inspected by Ofsted. We will also supply a copy of the inspection report to parents and carers of children attending the setting on a regular basis.

6. Stages of complaint

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Most often, complaints or concerns can be resolved quickly and informally by speaking either to a Department Leader or to Lindsey Vincent (Manager) in the first instance. In many cases, this will result in the matter being resolved immediately to the complainant's satisfaction.

All complaints will be recorded fully including any agreed actions. If the matter remains unresolved, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Formal resolution

If stage 1 has not been successful, then complaints should be put in writing and addressed to the Senior Management Team, who will give due consideration as to how the matter be resolved. In most cases, a

member of the Senior Management Team will meet parents, normally within 5 working days of receiving the complaint and if possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

It may be necessary for the matter to be investigated further. Once the Senior Management Team is satisfied that as far as practicable, all relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of the decision, and how it has been arrived at, in writing.

Records will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to any complaint. Records of all complaints will be kept in the office. A copy is available for parents or Ofsted on request.

Contacting Ofsted:

As an alternative to this procedure, or if parents feel a matter has not been resolved satisfactorily, you have the right to pass your complaint to OFSTED on the following number

9. Record-keeping

We will record the progress of all complaints, including information about actions taken at all stages, the stage at which the complaint was resolved, and the final outcome. The records will also include copies of letters and emails, and notes relating to meetings and phone calls.

This material will be treated as confidential and held centrally, and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint or on the review panel.

This is except where the secretary of state (or someone acting on their behalf) or the complainant requests access to records of a complaint through a freedom of information (FOI) request or under the terms of the Data Protection Act, or where the material must be made available during an inspection.

Records of complaints will be kept for 3 years.

The details of the complaint, including the names of individuals involved, will not be shared with the Directors in case a review panel needs to be organised at a later point.

Complainants also have the right to request an independent panel if they believe there is likely to be bias in the proceedings. The decision to approve this request is made by the governing board, who will not unreasonably withhold consent.

10. Learning lessons

The Nursery Manager will review any underlying issues raised by complaints, where appropriate, and respecting confidentiality, determine whether there are any improvements that the Nursery can make to its procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The Nursery Manager will monitor the effectiveness of the complaints procedure in ensuring that complaints are handled properly.

The complaints records are logged and managed by the Data Protection Officer. This policy will be reviewed by the Nursery Manager every two years. At each review, the policy will be approved by the Directors of Ramillies Hall Ltd.

Reviewed January 2024
Next review January 2026