

## **12.9**

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The Ark Centre is dedicated to providing a high quality of care for every student who attends the setting. However, there may be circumstances where mistakes may be made or the parents/carer do not agree with the course of action taken. Within these situations then the complaints procedure set out below is to be followed.

The Ark Centre Manager is responsible for managing complaints. However, if the complaint is against the Manager, then the Deputy Manager will be responsible.

#### *Making a complaint*

##### Stage 1

Parents/carers are welcomed and encouraged to have open and regular discussions with The Ark Centre to comment on the service, whether positive or negative.

Often if the complaint is concerned with The Ark Centre activities or about the conduct of a member of staff it will be possible to resolve by speaking to the individual concerned.

If a resolution has not been found then step two of the procedure will be followed.

##### Stage 2

If a discussion does not come to a satisfying conclusion for both sides then the parent/carer will be asked to put the complaint into writing to the Manager. It should include:

- Relevant names
- Dates
- Evidence
- Any other important information should be included

The Ark Centre will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint as soon as possible, the aim is within three working days and it will be fully investigated within 15 working days. If there is a delay then The Ark Centre will inform the parents/carers as to the cause.

A 'Record of Complaints Log' will be completed by the Manager and provide a formal response to the complaint with action which needs to be taken. A copy of the complaint should then be sent to all parties involved within the complaint.

##### Stage 3

If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with our manager. The parent may have a friend or partner present if they prefer and our manager should have the support 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 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, we log the summative points in our Complaint Investigation Record.

If there is concern the situation is linked to Child Protection, the Designated Child Protection Officer should be informed and the Safeguarding Policy should be followed.

If any party in the complaint has good reason to believe that a criminal offence has been committed then the police should be contacted.

If a conclusion to the complaint has not been reached, then all documentation will be collated and passed to the Registered Person who will adjudicate the case. The Registered Person will then make a detailed response, including actions to be taken, to all parties involved with the complaint, within 15 working days.

*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 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 or local safeguarding partners.
- In these cases, both the parent and our setting are informed and our manager work with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board or local safeguarding partners 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](http://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.