



Early Learning and Childcare Centre

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Ferryfield welcomes complaints, comments and suggestions as a means of improving our service to children and their families. Both service users and staff are actively encouraged to make their views known to staff in the knowledge that these views will receive a considered response. Complaints, comments and suggestions can be made both verbally and in writing, to any member of staff, although the Chairperson will ultimately be responsible for administering this procedure.

Informal Complaints, Comments & Suggestions

Many concerns can often be dealt with without recourse to the formal complaint procedure.

- Both staff and management are encouraged to deal with minor informal concerns promptly and courteously and to provide an appropriate response to the concern.
- However both staff and management should establish whether or not the complainant views the concern as minor and that an informal approach is acceptable to them.
- While responses to informal complaints can be made verbally, staff/management should still record the complaint and the response made in the complaints book.
- When an informal concern has not been satisfactorily resolved, the concern should be recorded in writing and passed to the Manager, the formal complaints procedure will then be followed.

Formal Complaints

- The investigation of all formal complaints is the responsibility of the Manager.
- If the complaint concerns the Manager, then the Chairperson is responsible for investigating the complaint.
- All formal complaints will be responded to in writing.
- When a formal complaint is made verbally, the staff member receiving the complaint will write it down and check with the complainant that the complaint has been received and understood accurately.
- The complainant can make their own written complaint.
- The complainant will receive a written response outlining the initial complaint, the investigation process and the outcome of the investigation.
- The complainant will be requested to make a response, which will be included in the final report.
- Whilst every endeavour will be made to ensure a quick resolution, due to the complexity of some complaints it may take up to 28 days to make a formal response.
- The complainant will be informed of their right to appeal.
- All formal complaints will be recorded, by the Manager, in the Complaints Book, detailing
 - The names of the person(s) complaining and the date of the complaint
 - The details of the investigation
 - The actions taken as a result
 - The final outcomes
 - The date of completion

Appeal Process

- On receipt of the Managers response, if the complainant is still dissatisfied, an appeal can be redressed to the Committee.
- This should be made in writing to the Chairperson, and should explain the reasons for the continuing dissatisfaction.

- This appeal should be made within 14 days of receiving a response from the Manager.
- The Committee will provide a written response within 14 days.
- The Chairperson will record the details of the secondary complaint in the complaints book.

Arbitration

- If on receipt of the Chairperson’s response to the complaint, the complainant still remains dissatisfied, arbitration can be arranged.
- A request for arbitration should be made in writing to the Manager, explaining the reasons for the continuing dissatisfaction. The request should be made within 14 days of receiving the original response from the Chairperson.
- Arbitration will be led by an independent person. The complainant, the manager, the chairperson and any staff involved in the complaint must be able to attend.
- The arbitrator will make a decision verbally at the meeting. The arbitrator will record the outcome of the arbitration in the Complaints Book. The arbitrator’s decision is final.

Role of Staff

- Staff will encourage and promote an environment of mutual respect, trust and open communication in their day to day work with children and their parents / carers and will treat everyone equally and fairly.
- If requested staff will be required to explain the complaints system to service users, to assist them to use the system and to help manage the expectation of the service users during this process.
- Staff should ensure that discussions of both informal and formal complaints take place in a private area.

Social Care and Social Work in Scotland (SCSWIS) (known as the Care Inspectorate)

- Complainants are under no obligation to raise complaints / concerns directly with Ferryfield, although we would encourage this. Complaints / concerns can be made directly to the Care Inspectorate who will then determine how best to proceed.
- Complainants who are dissatisfied with the outcome of Ferryfield’s investigation can also contact the Care Inspectorate to declare their dissatisfaction.
- The Care Inspectorate can be contacted at:

The Care Inspectorate, Compass House, Dundee, Tayside, DD1 4NY
 Telephone Number : 0845 600 9527
 Email : enquiries@careinspectorate.com

Persistent and Vexatious Complainers

- Where it appears to the Management Committee that there is a persistent and vexatious complainer, contact will be made with the Care Inspectorate to discuss the most appropriate course of action to take.

Storage of Complaints Book

- The Ferryfield Complaints Book will be located in a lockable filing cabinet and is subject to Ferryfield’s Confidentiality policy.

Adopted by the Committee

Date

August 2016