



## **The Place Charity No: 1175671**

We are committed to working in an open and accountable way to deliver the best service we can to all our users. We take any complaint seriously and will use it as an opportunity to improve and develop.

We aim to make our complaints process

- Easy- we aim to make making a complaint straightforward, taking into accounts that people may have different preferred ways of communicating
- Prompt and polite -we aim to respond to complainants promptly, politely and where appropriate confidentially
- Full and impartial - we aim to investigate the complaint fully and impartially, responding to the complainant within a reasonable timescale
- Timely - we aim to acknowledge receipt of any complaint promptly and to respond within a reasonable timescale
- Clear - we aim to provide clear information and support both to the complainant and to any member of our organisation who is the subject of a complaint
- Escalate if necessary - we aim to provide details of how a complaint can be escalated should the complaint not be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction

### **Policy:**

We welcome suggestions on how to improve our provision and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the project. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly, by an informal approach with the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, 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 of the parties involved.

We will keep a written record of any complaints that reach stage two and above, and their outcome. This will be made available to our users on request.

There are 5 stages to making a complaint

### **Stage 1**

Any client who has a concern about an aspect of our service should talk over his/her concerns with our manager first of all. Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage. We will record the issue, and how it was resolved. Our trustees will be informed that an issue was raised and how it was resolved.

The manager can be approached directly or via phone or email:

Email: [manager@theplace-faringdon.org](mailto:manager@theplace-faringdon.org)

Phone: 01367 244825

### **Stage 2**

If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the client will be invited to put the concerns or complaint in writing. For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints in the Complaint Investigation Record; the form may be completed the manager and signed by the parent. Our project stores all information relating to written complaints. When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the manager will meet with the complainant to discuss the outcome. The chair of trustees will be informed that a written complaint has been made. We aim to inform a complainant of the outcome of the investigation within 28 working days of him/her making the complaint. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, we log the summative points in our Complaint Investigation Record.

A complaint may be resolved by

- Any misunderstandings that led to the complaint being resolved

- The circumstances that led to the complaint being changed so that they no longer give cause for concern
- A resolution being reached that is acceptable to all involved
- An apology

### **Stage 3**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she can request a meeting with our manager and a trustee. The complainant 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.

### **Stage 4**

If at the stage three meeting the complainant cannot reach agreement with us we may invite an external mediator 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 us to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved. The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. She/he can hold separate meetings with our staff 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.

### **Stage 5**

When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the complainant, our manager and the nominated trustee is held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal about 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.

## **Safeguarding**

If a child appears to be at risk, we follow the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

If a client has safeguarding concerns about a child they should contact the MASH: 0345 050 7666

## **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 clients on request.

## **Escalation**

We aim to resolve your complaint honestly, openly and in a satisfactory way. However, if after going through all stages of our procedure you do not feel the issue has been resolved you can contact the following agencies:

The Charity Commission tel 0845 30000 218 or see their website <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

The Information Commissioner's Office <https://ico.org.uk/concerns>

The Funding Regulator enquiries@fundingregulator.org.uk

## Appendix 1 Pro forma Letter of Acknowledgement

Dear

I am writing to confirm that I have received your letter of complaint dated (insert date)  
Thank you for drawing these matters to my attention. The Place welcomes the  
comments of all service users. we seek to deal with complaints thoroughly and fairly,  
within our complaints policy and procedure.

(insert name and job title here) has been nominated to investigate your complaint. They  
will contact you shortly to make arrangements to look into the circumstances of your  
concerns. We are committed to completing the complaints process within 28 days of  
receiving your complaint.

Yours sincerely Name

Job Title

Contact email and phone number