

## **Complaints and Compliments Policy**

At Grantham Farm Montessori School we strive to provide the highest quality of care and education for our children and families and believe that all parents\* are treated with care, courtesy and respect.

We hope that at all times parents are happy and satisfied with the quality and service provided and we encourage parents to voice their appreciation to the staff concerned and/or management. We record all compliments and share these with staff.

We welcome any suggestions from parents on how we can improve our services, and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns that parents may have. Any concerns will be dealt with professionally and promptly to ensure that any issues arising from them are handled effectively and to ensure the welfare of all children, enable ongoing cooperative partnership with parents and to continually improve the quality of the school.

We have a formal procedure for dealing with complaints where we are not able to resolve a concern. Where any concern or complaint relates to child protection, we follow our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.

### **Complaints procedure**

#### **Stage 1 – informal resolution**

If any parent should have cause for concern or any queries regarding the care or education provided by the school, they should in the first instance take it up with the child's key person or teacher, or a senior member of staff. In many cases, the matter will be resolved at this stage to the parents' satisfaction. If the key worker or teacher cannot resolve the matter alone it may be necessary for them to consult with a member of the school Senior Leadership Team. Stage 1 complaints should be addressed within 5 working days from the point they were received. Where there are reasons that prevent this from happening, the staff member dealing with the complaint will notify the parents and provide an amended timeframe.

Notes about any complaint should be written up by the person receiving the complaint and shared with the head teacher on the same day.

A note should be kept of the date a resolution was reached and the agreed nature of this.

Should the matter not be resolved on an informal basis, in a face to face meeting, despite the key worker's or teacher's best efforts, within five working days or in the event that the member of staff and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure.

#### **Stage 2 – Formal resolution**

If the issue still remains unresolved or parents feel they have received an unsatisfactory outcome, then they must present their concerns in writing as a formal complaint to the head

teacher. The head teacher will then investigate the complaint and report back to the parent within 5 working days indicating how the school proposes to proceed. It may be necessary for the head teacher or deputy taking the lead, to carry out further investigations. If this is the case, then written records will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. The head teacher will document the complaint fully and the actions taken in relation to it in the complaints log book.

Parents will be informed of the school's decision, and the reasoning behind it, in writing. Where it is not possible to give a full reply within 10 working days of the complaint being received, the head teacher will notify the parents and provide an amended time frame.

It is expected that a resolution will be reached at stage 1 or 2 and that parents will feel assured that all of their concerns have been fully and fairly considered. If, in extreme circumstances, parents are not satisfied with the process, we proceed to stage 3.

### **Stage 3 – Panel hearing**

If the matter is still not resolved, the school will make provision for a panel hearing. The panel will be convened in response to a written request made to the head teacher by the complainant, with the meeting scheduled as soon as practicable and within 20 working days of receiving the request.

The panel will be appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor, and consist of at least 3 people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At least one of these panel members will be independent of the management of the school, not a member of the school workforce and not a representative of the school. The parent may wish to be accompanied to the panel meeting. This does not confer the right on a parent to have a legal representative to make representations on their behalf, although the school may allow this if it wishes. The panel hearing will take place on school premises at a time that is mutually convenient for all parties as far as is practicably possible.

If a parent does not exercise the right to attend a panel hearing, this does not remove the school's obligation to hold the hearing. The school's arrangements for the panel hearing should be reasonable in order to facilitate the parent(s) exercising the right of attendance.

### **Record Keeping**

The school will make a formal written record of the meeting and document any actions; this will be kept for a period of five years. The record will include the name of the complainant, the nature of the complaint, date and time complaint received, action(s) taken, result of any investigations and any information given to the complainant including a dated response. All parties present at the meeting will review the accuracy of the record, and be asked to sign to agree it. The panel's findings and recommendations will be shared with both the complainant and the person complained about within 5 days of the meeting. This will signify the conclusion of the procedure.

A copy of the findings will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act requests access to them; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

The number of formal complaints, received in an academic year, is made available to parents within the Complaints Procedure. This information includes whether they were resolved following a formal procedure or proceeded to panel hearing. The School will also keep a record of actions taken as a result of complaints, regardless of whether they were upheld.

**No Stage 2 and Stage 3 complaints have been received in the academic year 2022/2023.**

### **Early Years**

This policy is compliant with the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where parents believe that the school is not fulfilling the requirements of the EYFS they are entitled to raise concerns with Ofsted (see below for contact details). All complaints relating to the EYFS are investigated and complainants will be notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint. Where parents do not believe that an early years complaint has been resolved they can raise this with Ofsted via email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) or telephone 0300 123 1231. All paperwork with regard to complaints to Ofsted will be kept by the school for three years.

### **Contact details for Ofsted:**

Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

Telephone: **0300 123 1231**

By post:

**Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD**

Department for Education: 01325 735 662

Parents will also be informed if the school becomes aware that they are going to be inspected and after inspection the school will provide a copy of the report to parents and/or carers of children attending on a regular basis.

\* For the purpose of this publication the term 'parents' will be used to describe all types of primary caregivers, such as biological and adoptive parents, foster carers and guardians.

<b>This policy was adopted on</b>	<b>Signed on behalf of the school</b>	<b>Date for review</b>
<i>September 2023</i>	<i>E. Wetherley</i>	<i>September 2024</i>