**Complaints Policy**

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# Introduction

At The Little Bumblebee Nursery, we are dedicated to creating a nurturing and supportive environment where every child can thrive emotionally, socially, and academically. Central to our commitment is the belief that open communication is fundamental to building strong partnerships with parents and guardians. We recognize that concerns or complaints may arise, and we embrace these opportunities to learn, improve, and strengthen our commitment to the well-being of each child.

* Scope

This policy applies to parents, guardians, and individuals with a legitimate interest in the well-being of the children attending The Little Bumblebee Nursery. It encompasses complaints related to various aspects of nursery operations, including staff behaviour and conduct, and addresses concerns ranging from minor issues to serious allegations. The policy outlines procedures for reporting, investigating, and resolving all complaints to ensure the safety and satisfaction of all parties involved.

* Key Principles

*Accessibility and Transparency:*

* The complaints procedure is readily accessible to all parents, guardians, and staff members. Information about the procedure is transparently communicated, ensuring everyone is aware of how to raise concerns.

*Fair and Impartial Resolution:*

* Every complaint will be treated fairly and impartially. The nursery is committed to conducting thorough investigations, considering all relevant information, and providing unbiased resolutions.

*Confidentiality:*

* The nursery respects the confidentiality of all parties involved in a complaint. Information shared during the complaints process is handled with discretion, ensuring privacy is maintained.

*Open Communication:*

* Throughout the complaints process, open and clear communication is encouraged. Both complainants and nursery staff are encouraged to express their concerns, provide relevant information, and seek clarification as needed.

*Learning and Improvement:*

* The nursery views complaints as opportunities for learning and improvement. Feedback received through the complaint’s procedure is analysed to identify areas for enhancement in nursery practices and services.

*Record-Keeping:*

* Detailed records of complaints and their resolutions are maintained securely. This helps in monitoring trends, identifying recurring issues, and demonstrating the nursery's commitment to accountability.

*Continuous Review:*

* The complaints procedure undergoes regular reviews to ensure its effectiveness. Feedback from complainants, as well as internal evaluations, contributes to continuous improvements in the process.

*External Resolution Options:*

* Parents are made aware that they can contact Ofsted at any time they have a concern including at all stages of the complaints procedure and are given information on how to contact Ofsted. Ofsted is the registered authority for nurseries in England and investigate all complaints that suggest a provider may not be meeting the requirements of the nursery 's registration.
* Relevant legislation and guidance

**Education Act 2002**

**Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework**

**Children Act 1989 and 2004**

**Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

**Freedom of Information Act 2000**

# Staff, Student, and Volunteer Complaints Expectations:

* Roles and Responsibilities for Complaints

To ensure a constructive and supportive environment for all, we establish clear expectations for staff, students, and volunteers regarding their roles and responsibilities in handling complaints.

*Active Communication:*

* Staff, students, and volunteers should encourage open communication and actively listen to any concerns raised by parents, guardians, or other stakeholders.
* Promptly report any complaints or concerns to the appropriate channels within the nursery.

*Professional Conduct:*

* Maintain a professional and respectful demeanour when addressing complaints.
* Collaborate with the nursery's management to resolve complaints in a fair and impartial manner.

*Confidentiality:*

* Treat all complaints with confidentiality, sharing information only with those directly involved in the resolution process.
* Respect the privacy of individuals involved and avoid discussing complaints outside of the necessary professional context.

*Documentation:*

* Keep accurate records of complaints, including details of the concern, actions taken, and resolutions achieved.
* Submit timely and comprehensive reports to the designated personnel responsible for managing complaints.

*Resolution Assistance:*

* Provide assistance and information to the designated respondent responsible for addressing and resolving complaints.
* Cooperate with any investigations or processes initiated to resolve a complaint.

*Continuous Improvement:*

* Offer constructive feedback on the complaints handling process to contribute to ongoing improvements.
* Participate in any training or development opportunities related to effective complaint resolution.

*Adherence to Policies:*

* Familiarize themselves with and adhere to the nursery's complaints policy and procedures.
* Collaborate with the nursery's management to implement any updates or changes to the complaints policy.

By adhering to these expectations, staff, students, and volunteers play a crucial role in maintaining a positive and constructive environment at The Little Bumblebee Nursery. This commitment ensures that complaints are addressed promptly, fairly, and with the utmost professionalism.

* Compliance and Disciplinary Measures

At The Little Bumblebee Nursery, we prioritize a fair and transparent complaints resolution process. It is crucial that all staff, students, and volunteers comply with the established policies and guidelines to maintain a positive and supportive environment. To ensure accountability, the following compliance and disciplinary measures are in place:

*Policy Adherence:*

* Failure to comply with the policy may result in disciplinary action, including verbal or written warnings.

*Timely Reporting:*

* Any staff, student, or volunteer who becomes aware of a complaint is obligated to report it promptly to the designated personnel.
* Deliberate failure to report or withholding information relevant to a complaint may result in disciplinary measures.

*Confidentiality Breach:*

* Breaching confidentiality by sharing information about a complaint outside of the necessary professional context is strictly prohibited.
* Unauthorized disclosure of complaint details may lead to disciplinary action, including formal written warnings.

*Unprofessional Conduct:*

* Engaging in unprofessional conduct during the complaint resolution process, such as disrespectful behaviour or non-cooperation, will not be tolerated.
* Instances of unprofessional conduct may result in progressive disciplinary measures, including suspension or termination.

*Failure to Participate:*

* Failure to actively participate in the resolution process, including providing necessary information or attending meetings, may result in disciplinary action.
* Staff, students, or volunteers are expected to cooperate fully to ensure a thorough and fair resolution.

*Continuous Improvement Neglect:*

* Neglecting opportunities for continuous improvement, such as feedback on the complaints handling process, may be addressed through disciplinary measures.
* Participation in training and development activities related to complaints resolution is essential, and failure to do so may result in consequences.

*Recurrent Violations:*

* Recurrent violations of the complaints policy, even after disciplinary actions, may lead to more severe consequences, including termination of employment or dismissal from volunteering or student placements.
* By establishing clear expectations and consequences, The Little Bumblebee Nursery aims to create an environment where all stakeholders actively contribute to the resolution of complaints while upholding professionalism and accountability.

# Complaints Processes and Procedures

* Reporting Procedures

**Stage 1: Informal Stage**

* Have any parents who guardian cause for concern on any queries regarding the care or early learning provided by the nursery should have, they should in the first instance take it up with the child's key person or senior member of staff/ room leader.

**Stage 2: Formal Stage**

* If the concern remains unresolved after the informal stage, a formal written complaint should be submitted to the Nursery Manager. The complaint should include details of the issue, the steps taken so far, and the desired resolution.

**Serious Allegations:**

* Serious allegations, especially those related to child protection, should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
* Investigation Procedure

**Acknowledgment:**

* The Nursery Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three working days.

**Investigation:**

* An investigation will be conducted promptly, involving relevant staff members as necessary. The Nursery Manager may meet with the complainant to gather additional information.

**Response:**

* A written response outlining the findings of the investigation and any proposed actions will be provided between 5 – 28 working days of the complaint acknowledgment. If more time is required, the complainant will be informed of the delay and given an estimated timeframe.

**Stage 3: Appeal**

* If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may appeal the decision. The appeal should be made in writing to the nursery manager within 10 working days of receiving the initial response.

**Appeal Meeting:**

* Following this the nursery will hold a formal meeting between the manager, parents, and a senior staff member to ensure that it is dealt with comprehensively. The nursery will make a record of the meeting and document any actions taken. All parties present at the meeting will review the accuracy of the record and be asked to sign to agree to it and a copy will be provided to the complainant. This will signify the conclusion of the procedure.

**Recording and Monitoring**

* All formal complaints and their resolutions will be recorded in a complaints log. The nursery will regularly review and analyse these records to identify opportunities for improvement.

**Stage 4: External Authority**

* If the complainant remains dissatisfied after exhausting the nursery's internal procedures, they may contact the regulatory authority (OFSTED) for further guidance.
* Confidentiality
* All parties involved in the complaint process are expected to maintain confidentiality. Information will only be disclosed to those directly involved in the resolution process, please refer to our Confidentiality Policy for further information.
* This policy is regularly reviewed to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant regulations. Parents, guardians, and staff members are provided with a copy and are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the procedures outlined.

# Policy management and review

* The Little Bumblebee will review this policy annually. In cases of relevant legal or procedural changes, we will review this policy accordingly. The policy should be made available on the Nursery website, with paper copies provided by the Nursery upon request.
* The policy should be approved, signed and dated and the date for review noted.
* The policy should be provided to and followed by all staff and volunteers.

This policy statement was adopted on 01/02/2023.

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| Reviewed By: Mojdeh Najafpoor | Date: 01/01/2024 |
| Signed:  A handwritten oval shape with a black line  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | Next Review Date: 01/01/2025 |