

### **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records**

Providers must put in place a written procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents and/or carers.

## **Concerns Complaints and Compliments Policy**

### **Statement of intent**

The Gap Club Ltd is committed to providing a safe, stimulating, consistent and accessible service to children and their parents/carers. We will always aim to provide high quality services for all concerned but accept that sometimes things do not always go to plan. In such circumstances, we want to know about these things so that we can put them right and learn from them.

The Gap Club Ltd believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of our settings and/or our staff. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns.

This policy constitutes the setting's formal complaints procedure and it will be displayed in the setting.

If the manager has good reason to believe that the situation has child protection implications, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed who will then ensure that the local social services department and LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) is contacted if necessary, according to the procedure set out in the Safeguarding Policy. If any party involved in the complaint has good reason to believe that a criminal offence has been committed, then the police will be contacted.

If a situation has child protection concerns and relates to the manager, then the parent/carer should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Company – Rekha Bassi.

### **Stage 1 - Concern**

If a parent/carer has a complaint about some aspect of the setting's activity, about the service the setting provides, or about the conduct of a member of staff, it will often be possible to resolve the problem by simply speaking to the individual concerned. As outlined in the Partnership with Parents and Carers Policy, the setting is committed to open and regular dialogue with parents/carers and the setting welcomes all comments on its services, regardless of whether they are positive or negative.

In the first instance, parents/carers are encouraged to speak directly to the member of staff, or key person if appropriate. If not, the manager should be approached and they will try to resolve the problem. If a resolution cannot be found, then Stage Two of the procedure will formally come into operation.

If the concern is regarding the manager, then the parent/carers should speak to a senior manager whose address details and telephone number can be obtained from head office.

We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved. We will record your concerns for completeness and file in the setting in the Compliments and Complaints File but these do not form part of the complaints procedure.

## **Stage 2 - Formal Complaint**

If informal discussions of a complaint or concern have not produced a satisfactory resolution to the situation, parents/carers should put their complaint in detail and in writing to the senior manager. Relevant names, dates, evidence and any other important information on the nature of the complaint should be included.

We will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 working days and will give you a response to your complaint within 10 working days. We shall explain what we are doing to resolve the issues you have raised if it will take longer than 10 days to do this. The senior manager will be responsible for sending a full and formal response of the outcome of the investigation to you within 28 days of having received the complaint.

The formal response to the complaint from the setting will be sent to the parent/carer concerned and copied to all relevant members of staff if appropriate. The response will include an account of the findings; any actions taken as a result; recommendations for dealing with the complaint and any amendments to the setting's policies or procedures emerging from the investigation.

The senior manager will arrange a time to meet the parent/carer concerned and any other relevant individuals, such as members of staff, to discuss the complaint and the setting's response to it. They will judge if it is best for all parties to meet together or if individual meetings are more appropriate.

If, at the conclusion of this process, parents/carers remain dissatisfied with the response they have received, the original complaint along with the setting's response will be passed to the General Manager who will adjudicate the case at Stage 3.

## **Stage 3 - Final Resolution**

If the complaint has not been resolved by Stage 2, then the General Manager will arrange individual meetings with the setting, staff and the parent/carers with a view to seeking an amicable resolution to the matter. Representatives are welcome to support either parties. It is important that the complaint is resolved in an independent, fair, unbiased and open process, and to that end the General Manager will, if needed, use the services of an external mediator who has no legal powers but may help define the problem, review the actions so far and suggest further ways to improve the outcome.

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 are requested to sign the record and each receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record and kept in the Compliments and Complaints File in the setting with duplicate copies held at Head Office.

Staff or volunteers within the Pre-school Learning Alliance are appropriate people to be invited to act as mediators as well as members of the Early Years department of the relevant Local Authority. The decision of the General Manager at Stage 3 is final.

## **Records**

The setting must ensure that there is a written record of complaints, any action taken and the outcome of any investigation, and provide a summary, on request, to any parent/carer and Ofsted. Records must be retained for a period of at least three years from the date on which the record was made.



Parents will be allowed access to all written records about their children on request (except in exceptional cases). The setting will also supply a copy of the most recent Ofsted report to parents/carers of children attending.

### **The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted), the Local Safeguarding Children Board 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. The Ofsted contact details are displayed on the setting's notice board and below.

If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Boards for the relevant authority. In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the setting leader works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Boards along with the Local Childcare Services 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. 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)

Office for Standards in Education  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)  
Telephone: Helpline: 0300 123 1231  
Compliance, Investigation & Enforcement: 0300  
123 4666

**Local Authority Additional Support For Berkshire Clubs:** Contact the RBWM Early Years Development Childcare Team, Early Years & Childcare Centre, Ellington Primary School, Cookham Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 7JA (or Tel: 01628 683800)

**Local Authority Additional Support For Surrey Clubs:** Contact the Surrey Early Years and Childcare Service, Fairmount House, Bull Hill, Leatherhead, KT22 7AH (or Tel: 01372 833 833).

### **Compliments**

Good practice evolves to outstanding practice with effective partnership working, honesty, and reflection. We welcome compliments and suggestions for improvements from children, parents and carers and other stakeholders involved with The Gap Club Ltd.

To facilitate positive feedback, we invite parents to feedback informally and regularly, and also through customer service questionnaires and suggestion boxes in the setting.

We cannot, however, accept any monetary gifts or expensive presents; your appreciation of our work and achievements is valued and word of mouth recognition is gratifying. We actively share our successes and praises informally and at quality team meetings.

### **EYFS key themes and commitments relating to complaints**

A Unique Child   Positive Relationships   Enabling Environments   Learning and



Updated – June 2022



			Development
1.2 Inclusive practice	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.2 Supporting every child 3.4 The wider context	

**Every Child Matters Outcome:** Staying safe

To be reviewed: June 2023	Signed: NM
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