

# **CARTWHEELS CHILDREN'S CENTRES**

## **Complaints Procedure**

As a member of the pre-school Learning Alliance and Suffolk ACRE we aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all children. We aim to offer a welcome to each individual child and family and to provide a warm and caring environment within which all children can learn and develop as they play.

We believe children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community generally and quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, the following procedures should be used:

### **Complaints procedure**

A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the group's provision should first talk over any worries or anxieties with the Children's Centres Manager.

If this does not have a satisfactory outcome within a couple of weeks, or if the problem reoccurs, the parent should put concerns or complaints in writing to the Children's Centres Manager and management committee.

The next step is to request a meeting with the Children's Centres Manager and chair of the management committee. Both the Children's Centres Manager and parent may request a friend to be present and an agreed written record of the discussion should be made.

**Most complaints should be resolved informally at this 'initial stage'.**

If the matter is still not sorted out to the parent's satisfaction, the parent should again contact the chair. At this point, if parent and group cannot reach agreement, it might be helpful to invite an external mediator, one who is acceptable to both parties, to listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help define the problem, review action so far and suggest further ways it may be resolved.

Staff or volunteers within the pre-school alliance will be available to act as mediator if both parties wish it.

The mediator will keep all discussions confidential. S/he will meet with the group as requested and will keep an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and any advice s/he has given. The involvement of a mediator represents the final stage in the complaints procedure.

### **The role of the registering body**

In some circumstances, it will be necessary to bring in the registering body, which has a duty to ensure laid down requirements are adhered to and with whom the Pre-school Learning Alliance works in partnership to encourage high standards. The registering body would be involved if a child appeared to be at risk or where there seems to be a possible breach of registration requirements. In these cases both parent and pre-school would be informed and the Pre-school Learning Alliance fieldworker would work with the registering body to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint followed by appropriate action.

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at an early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interest of the Centres and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way that respects confidentiality.

Our registering body is OfSTED and can be contacted by telephoning the helpline on: 0845 6014771, or writing to :

Early years OfSTED  
2nd floor  
Field House  
Station Approach  
Harlow  
CM20 2FS