

Complaints Procedure Policy

Policy Statement

Aflah Nursery is committed to providing high-quality early education and care for all children and their families. We recognise the importance of working in partnership with parents and carers and welcome comments, suggestions and concerns as opportunities to improve our service.

We believe that concerns and complaints should be addressed promptly, fairly and openly, with due regard to confidentiality and the welfare of children.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), specifically the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements relating to complaints.

EYFS Reference: Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements – Information and Records (Complaints).

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Ensure concerns and complaints are taken seriously and dealt with promptly.
- Promote positive relationships with parents and carers.
- Ensure complaints are investigated fairly and impartially.
- Meet the requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework.
- Maintain accurate records of complaints and outcomes.
- Safeguard the welfare of children at all times.

Who Can Make a Complaint?

Complaints may be made by:

- Parents and carers;
- Family members;
- Visitors;
- Professionals working with the nursery;
- Members of the public.

Children's welfare and safety will always remain the nursery's primary concern throughout any complaint investigation.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Most concerns can be resolved quickly through discussion.

Parents or carers who are unhappy about any aspect of the nursery's provision are encouraged to speak initially with:

- Their child's Key Person;
- The Room Leader;
- The Deputy Manager; or
- The Nursery Manager.

Staff will listen carefully to concerns and seek to resolve issues as quickly as possible.

Where appropriate, an agreed action plan will be implemented and monitored.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

If the concern cannot be resolved informally, or if the matter is serious, a formal complaint should be submitted in writing to the Nursery Manager.

The complaint should include:

- The nature of the complaint;
- Relevant dates and times;

Aflah Nursery

- Individuals involved;
- Any supporting evidence;
- The outcome sought by the complainant.

The Nursery Manager will:

- Acknowledge the complaint within 3 working days;
- Conduct a fair and objective investigation;
- Gather evidence and review relevant records;
- Speak to staff and witnesses where appropriate;
- Meet with the complainant if necessary;
- Maintain written records of the investigation;
- Provide a written outcome and explanation of any actions taken.

The nursery will investigate and provide a written response within 28 days of receiving the complaint.

EYFS Reference: Providers must investigate all written complaints relating to EYFS requirements and notify complainants of the outcome within 28 days.

Investigating Complaints

The Nursery Manager will normally investigate complaints concerning:

- Day-to-day nursery operations;
- Care and learning provision;
- Communication with parents;
- Staff practice;
- Behaviour management;
- Nursery procedures and routines.

Investigations will be conducted fairly, objectively and confidentially.

The Nursery Manager will consider all available evidence before reaching a conclusion and determining any necessary actions.

Complaints About the Nursery Manager

Where a complaint concerns the Nursery Manager, they will not lead or oversee the investigation.

In such circumstances, the complaint will be investigated by:

- A Director;
- The Responsible Individual;
- The Operations Manager; or
- Another suitably independent person appointed by the nursery.

This ensures impartiality and fairness throughout the investigation process.

Safeguarding Complaints and Allegations

Any complaint involving:

- Child protection concerns;
- Safeguarding concerns;
- Allegations against staff;
- Allegations against volunteers;
- Allegations against managers or directors;

will be managed in accordance with the nursery's:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Allegations Against Staff Procedure;
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) procedures.

Where required, referrals will be made immediately to Children's Social Care, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the police and/or Ofsted.

Aflah Nursery

In these circumstances, external agencies may advise that the nursery should not undertake an internal investigation until safeguarding enquiries have been completed.

EYFS Reference: Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements – Child Protection.

Review by Senior Management

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they may request that the complaint be reviewed by the Directors or Responsible Individual.

The review will consider:

- Whether the investigation was conducted appropriately;
- Whether all relevant evidence was considered;
- Whether the outcome was reasonable and proportionate.

The outcome of the review will be communicated in writing.

Independent Mediation

Where appropriate, the nursery and complainant may agree to involve an independent mediator.

The mediator will:

- Listen to all parties;
- Review actions taken;
- Clarify areas of disagreement;
- Suggest possible resolutions.

The mediator has no legal powers but may assist parties in reaching a mutually acceptable outcome.

Whistleblowing

Staff, volunteers, students, parents and other stakeholders may raise concerns regarding unsafe practice, safeguarding issues or unlawful conduct through the nursery's Whistleblowing Policy.

Whistleblowing concerns will be treated seriously and investigated appropriately.

Recording Complaints

Aflah Nursery will maintain a written record of any complaints received relating to the fulfilment of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements and the action taken as a result.

The record will include the nature of the complaint, how it was investigated, any action taken, and the outcome.

Parents and carers who make a written complaint will be informed of the outcome of the investigation **within 28 days of the complaint being received**.

Complaint records will be treated confidentially and stored securely in accordance with the nursery's Data Protection and Record Keeping procedures.

Records relating to complaints will be made available to **Ofsted on request**.

Where a complaint raises a safeguarding or child protection concern, it will be dealt with immediately under the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures rather than waiting for the normal complaints process to conclude.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaints will be handled sensitively and confidentially.

Information relating to complaints will be managed in accordance with:

- UK GDPR;
- Data Protection Act 2018;
- The nursery's Confidentiality Policy;
- The nursery's Data Protection Policy.

Information will only be shared where there is a lawful basis to do so, including safeguarding responsibilities.

Ofsted

Parents and carers may contact Ofsted directly at any stage where they believe the nursery is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

Website: www.gov.uk/ofsted

Monitoring and Review

The Directors, Responsible Individual and Nursery Manager are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented effectively.

The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner in response to:

- Changes in legislation;
- Changes to the EYFS;
- Ofsted guidance updates;
- Learning arising from complaints investigations.

Date Approved: August 2026

Review Date: August 2027

Aflah Nursery