

6.1 Complaints

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Table of Contents

Policy Statement	2
Procedures – Making a Complaint	2
6.1.1 Stage 1 Complaint – Informal Discussion	2
6.1.2 Stage 2 Complaint – Written Complaint	3
6.1.3 Stage 3 Complaint – Review Meeting	3
6.1.4 Stage 4 Complaint – External Mediation	4
6.1.5 Stage 5 Complaint – Final Resolution Meeting	4
6.1.6 The Role of Ofsted and West Sussex Safeguarding Arrangements	4
6.1.7 Complaints Record	5

6.1 Complaints

Policy Statement

Miss B's Nursery is committed to providing a high standard of care and early years education for all children attending the setting. We take any concern about the nursery seriously and aim to respond promptly, fairly and respectfully.

If a parent or carer is unhappy with any aspect of the nursery's practice, provision or management, they are encouraged to raise this at the earliest opportunity. In many cases, concerns can be resolved quickly through an informal conversation with the appropriate member of staff. Where this is not possible, or where the issue remains unresolved, the nursery has a clear written complaints procedure.

Our aim is to address concerns openly and professionally and, wherever possible, to reach a satisfactory outcome for everyone involved.

This procedure reflects the requirements of the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**, which requires providers to have a written complaints procedure, to investigate written complaints relating to the EYFS requirements, to notify the complainant of the outcome within **28 days**, and to keep a written record of complaints and outcomes available to **Ofsted** on request. ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))

This policy also supports children's rights under the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**, including:

- **Article 3** – The best interests of the child must be a primary consideration.
- **Article 12** – Children have the right to have their views and interests taken seriously in matters affecting them.
- **Article 19** – Children have the right to protection from harm.
- **Article 28** – Children have the right to education in a safe and appropriate environment.

Procedures – Making a Complaint

Miss B's Nursery aims to resolve complaints through a series of progressive stages.

6.1.1 Stage 1 Complaint – Informal Discussion

In the first instance, any parent or carer who has a concern about Miss B's Nursery should discuss the matter with the **Manager**.

Most concerns are expected to be resolved at this informal stage through discussion and clarification. Where appropriate, particularly if the matter goes beyond a minor misunderstanding, the issue and its resolution will be noted in the nursery's **Complaints Investigation Record**.

6.1.2 Stage 2 Complaint – Written Complaint

If the concern is not resolved at Stage 1, or if the issue happens again, the parent or carer should move to Stage 2 by setting out the complaint in writing.

Where a parent or carer is not comfortable writing the complaint themselves, a member of staff may complete the nursery's complaint form on their behalf. The parent or carer must then sign and date the form to confirm that it accurately reflects their concern.

Miss B's Nursery keeps written complaints in a designated complaints file. Where a complaint requires a more detailed investigation, a separate file may be created specifically for that matter.

Once the investigation has been completed, the **Manager** will meet with the parent or carer to explain the outcome. The nursery will notify the complainant of the result of the investigation within **28 days** of receiving the written complaint, in line with EYFS requirements. ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))

Where the complaint is resolved at this stage, the key points and outcome will be entered in the **Complaints Investigation Record**, which is made available to Ofsted on request.

6.1.3 Stage 3 Complaint – Review Meeting

If the parent or carer remains dissatisfied after Stage 2, they may request a further meeting with the **Manager**.

The parent or carer may bring a friend, partner or supporter to the meeting if they wish.

A written record of the meeting will be prepared, including:

- the points discussed
- any agreed actions
- any decisions reached.

All parties present will sign the record and receive a copy.

The signed record indicates that the complaint has been considered formally at this stage. If the issue is resolved, summary details will be added to the **Complaints Investigation Record**.

6.1.4 Stage 4 Complaint – External Mediation

If no agreement can be reached at Stage 3, Miss B's Nursery may invite an **independent external mediator** to assist in resolving the matter.

The mediator must be acceptable to both parties. Their role is not to make a legal ruling, but to:

- Listen to both sides.
- clarify the issues.
- review what has already happened.
- Suggest possible ways forward.

The mediator may hold joint or separate meetings if this is considered helpful. All discussions remain confidential. The mediator will keep an agreed written record of meetings held and advice given.

6.1.5 Stage 5 Complaint – Final Resolution Meeting

Once the mediator has completed their involvement, a final meeting will be held between the parent or carer and the **Manager**.

The purpose of this meeting is to decide what action, if any, will be taken to conclude the complaint. The mediator's recommendations will be considered when reaching that decision. If all parties agree, the mediator may also attend the meeting.

A written record will be made of:

- The discussion.
- The outcome.
- The action to be taken.

Everyone attending the meeting will sign the record and receive a copy. This signed record confirms that the complaints process has concluded.

6.1.6 The Role of Ofsted and West Sussex Safeguarding Arrangements

A parent or carer may contact **Ofsted** at any point during the nursery's complaints procedure.

Ofsted can consider concerns about whether a childcare provider is meeting registration requirements, although it does not resolve private disputes between families and providers. Official guidance says

6: Complaints, contingencies and other matters

that complaints about a childcare provider can be made to Ofsted by email at enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or by telephone on 0300 123 4666. ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))

If the complaint suggests that a child may be at risk of harm, Miss B's Nursery will follow the procedures of the **West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSSCP)** and, where appropriate, make a referral through the **Integrated Front Door (IFD)**, which is West Sussex's single point of contact for children's social care and early help referrals. ([West Sussex SCP](#))

Where allegations concern an adult who works with children, West Sussex uses the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** process. The WSSCP explains that the LADO oversees allegations that a person working or volunteering with children may have harmed a child, committed an offence against a child, posed a risk of harm, or behaved in a way indicating they may be unsuitable to work with children. ([West Sussex SCP](#))

In safeguarding cases, the parent or carer and the nursery manager will be informed as appropriate, and staff will cooperate fully with Ofsted and relevant West Sussex safeguarding agencies.

6.1.7 Complaints Record

Miss B's Nursery keeps a written record of complaints relating to the nursery, its provision, the children attending, and the adults working within the setting.

The record includes:

- The date of the complaint.
- The nature of the concern.
- The action taken.
- the outcome.

Complaints records are retained for **at least three years** and are available for inspection by **Ofsted** on request, in line with EYFS requirements. ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))