

5. Quality of Opportunities

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1. Complaints and Compliments Policy

Policy Statement

Woodentots and **Woodland Wanderers** encourages parents and carers to share any concerns they may have regarding the running of the setting as soon as a problem or issue arises. In this respect the setting believes that dealing with a complaint at an early stage is the best way to prevent a problem from escalating.

The setting would rather know about problems at an early stage, so that we can investigate and put into place any necessary adjustments and improvements. Parents should be aware of the complaints procedure and urged to use it in order to try and minimise concerns escalating before they are resolved.

The Aims of the Policy

The aims of this policy are:

- to set out the procedures to be used for making a complaint to the provision, either verbally or in writing
- to establish the procedures to be followed by the provision when dealing with a complaint
- to set out the procedures to be used when a complaint has been made directly to Ofsted about the provision.

Complaints Procedure

Our complaints procedure is as follows:

1. All concerns and complaints will be dealt with courteously and promptly.
2. Confidentiality of those concerned in the complaint (adults and children) will be maintained, with only those who 'need to know' being aware of their identity.
3. Parents will be given a clear procedure as to how to complain which usually involves:
 - a. talking to the child's key person about their concern, or
 - b. talking to their manager if the concerns are about the key person or setting.
 - c. agreeing a course of action.
4. If no agreement can be made then the parent should put the complaint in writing to the provider who must then record the complaint and investigate it, keeping the parent informed. At all times, the provider should seek to resolve the concern and agree a course of action with the parent.
5. Written complaints must be investigated and the outcome reported back to the complainant within 28 days.
6. Verbal complaints will also be considered and resolved promptly to reach a satisfactory outcome for both the complainant and the provision.

7. The parent may wish to complain to Ofsted and providers should ensure that parents have the necessary information to do so. Ofsted can be contacted on 0300 123 4666, or at the address given on the Ofsted Poster on the Woodentots/Woodland Wanderers Noticeboard.
8. Any complaint received from Ofsted will be dealt with accordingly within the time-frame set by Ofsted and written records will be kept of all investigations and outcomes. Where appropriate the provider will agree the appropriate course of action with Ofsted.
9. Written records of complaints must include the date of the complaint, how it was made, the details of the complaint itself, who the complainant was, the EYFS requirement to which it relates, how the complaint was dealt with and by whom, actions proposed or taken, whether the record has been shared with the complainant and when. The staff member who completed the records must be signed and dated the document.
10. Parents or carers who do not use English as a first language will be provided with an appropriate version of the complaints procedure that they can understand.
11. Parents or carers with sensory disabilities or special communication needs will be given the appropriate assistance to be able to understand the complaints procedure and register a complaint if they so wish.

Implementation

All staff are responsible for the implementation of this policy. Overall responsibility for ensuring the policy is implemented, monitored and reviewed rests with the manager of the setting.

Training

All new staff should be made aware of this policy on induction. As any member of staff may receive a complaint, particularly a verbal one, all staff will be trained in the provision's complaints procedures and how to deal with parental concerns and complaints.

In addition, all staff should be given appropriate training in the skills and techniques necessary to implement the complaints procedure effectively for those who may have access issues.

Compliments

At Woodland Wanderers, we welcome and value positive feedback from children, parents/carers, visitors, and professionals. Compliments provide us with an opportunity to recognise good practice, celebrate staff achievements, and identify what we are doing well. Any compliments received, whether verbal or written, will be shared with the relevant staff members and recorded where appropriate. We are committed to maintaining high standards of care and education, and we appreciate all feedback that helps us continue to provide a positive experience for children and their families.

Feel free to drop us a comment on office@woodlandwanderers.info.

2. Admissions

Information on **Woodentots** and **Woodland Wanderers**, photographs and contact details are available to parents on our website.

We actively encourage parents to visit our settings while sessions are in progress so they can see how we operate and the interaction between the staff and the children. We request that parents make an appointment for these visits so that they do not have an impact on the running of the settings.

We request that parents complete an application form and then they are either placed on a waiting list or offered a place if there are vacancies in the setting of their choice. We request that parents keep us informed if they take up a place at another setting and no longer wish to remain on our list.

Before admission we will require parents/carers to complete a comprehensive pack of documentation. This provides us with permission for events such as outings and the taking of photographs and detailed information including medication, allergies and sudden illnesses on their child enabling us to provide continuity of care where possible, as well as meeting the child's individual needs. Every child in our setting must have at least two emergency contacts provided. Wherever emergency contacts are referenced in our policies, we reserve the right to contact both individuals if necessary.

All children are welcomed to attend our sessions and we make no discrimination. Children and families are all valued, regardless of their ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, sex, social and economic background, etc. We demonstrate a commitment to working with parents to provide an environment that is suitable for their child's individual needs, this includes supporting children in developing independent toileting, and we will not exclude children using nappies.

3. Settling In

Policy Statement

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in our settings and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with the setting.

Aim

We aim to make Woodentots and Woodland Wanderers a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

Procedure

In order to help children settle comfortably in our setting we use the following procedure.

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we will send information to the parents via email, with key information around their child starting at our setting.
- The child will be offered 2 separate settling in session both with and without a parent. This will help the child to feel comfortable in our setting and to begin to make a connection with their key person.
- We will work closely with parents to find out about the child's routine for example feeds and nap times and soothing preferences.

The key person can discuss with parents how this will be arranged so it is the least distressing to child and parent. They will ensure they know how to settle the child if he/she becomes distressed. Parents will be contacted immediately if staff are unsuccessful at settling a child and other strategies will be tried.

- Children are encouraged to bring in a comfort object (clearly labelled with their name) if it will enable them to settle.
- Some children take longer to settle. This can be for a variety of reasons; maybe they have not been left before or have had an unhappy previous experience when parted from their main carers. The key person will work with the parents to try different settling techniques. These might include leaving items of clothing that smell of a main carer, photographs of their family, tapes of their family singing lullabies or talking in their home language etc.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- Younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent to be on hand to re-settle them.

- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person; for example the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not ready to be left. We expect that the parent will honour the commitment to be available for at least the first week, or possibly longer, until their child can stay happily without them.
- We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from setting.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
- Within the first four to six weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to create their child's record of achievement.

4. Parents as Partners

It is very important for your child that we work in partnership. This will give your child continuity of care and he or she will not become confused with different standards of behaviour and boundaries.

As parents you are the central adults in your child's life and the ones making decisions on their behalf. We will work closely with you to carry out your wishes for your child wherever we can. It is therefore important that we have an excellent communication system. Please inform us if your child has had a disturbed sleep, is not feeling well or any other piece of information that will help us to provide him or her with the best care we can. Each child is allocated a key person, and they will be available for you, to exchange information and to discuss any concerns or issues.

We are always happy to discuss your child and their care with you at any time that is convenient to us both, whether in person or over the phone. We would also appreciate it if you could inform us if there are any changes to your contact numbers, including work and mobile numbers and those of your emergency contacts.

As your child grows and develops, issues will crop up that are very important for us to discuss in order that we can work together, and your wishes can be incorporated into our care routine for your child. These could include pottling training, managing behaviour, starting school, etc.

If you wish us to incorporate a special activity into our routine — perhaps a festival or religious holiday that you celebrate — please let us know.

If we have any concerns about your child's behaviour, development, eating, etc. we will share them with you and if necessary, work with you to seek support from outside agencies.

If your child is already involved with other support agencies, e.g. Portage, please let us know. With your permission we may be able to work directly with these organisations to provide a more comprehensive service for your child. If you have any concerns or issues regarding the care, we are providing for your child please let us know. Often a concern is a simple misunderstanding that can easily be resolved; if un-aided it can fester and become a major issue.

We welcome input into our nursery from parents. Please discuss with the manager or your key person if you would like to help within the setting. This might include working as a volunteer, coming along on outings, providing specialist information or skills and providing feedback. We are very much looking forward to working in partnership with you to care for your child.

END.