



## **GRIEVANCE POLICY**

This policy is a framework to provide a recognised channel through which a grievance can be brought to the attention of management by providing the right for an employee to have their grievance heard, investigated and resolved.

(Grievance: Any problem, issue or concern that an employee may have relating to their employment or engagement with Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery).

### **Objectives**

- Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery recognises that, from time to time, issues may arise which may cause members of staff some distress
- To ensure there are clear informal and formal processes for members of staff to raise grievances

### **Policy**

Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery encourages free communication between employees and their manager. This is to ensure that questions and problems arising during the course of employment can be aired and, where possible, resolved quickly and to the satisfaction of all concerned.

### **Procedure**

#### **Informal Process**

Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery expects that most grievances can be resolved informally through discussions between the individual and their manager, or if the grievance relates to the individual's manager, with one of the trustees.

Through this process, Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery would look to discuss all the issues with the individual, and work towards a satisfactory resolution without the need for a formal process. Where it is not possible to resolve the grievance informally, the formal process will be invoked.

#### **Formal Process**

If the grievance cannot be resolved informally the individual must detail their grievance in writing, including facts, times, dates, names and any other details. Again, if the grievance relates to the individual's manager, then the grievance must be addressed to one of the trustees.

## **Investigation**

On receipt of the formal complaint and depending on the content, it may be necessary for Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery to carry out an investigation into the grievance. The amount of any investigation required will depend on the nature of the allegations and will vary from case to case. It may involve interviewing and taking statements from the individual and any witnesses, and/or reviewing relevant documents. The individual who raised the grievance will be expected to cooperate fully with this investigation. Where considered appropriate, Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery may initiate an investigation before holding a grievance meeting. In other cases, Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery may hold a grievance meeting before deciding what investigation (if any) to carry out. In those cases Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery will hold a further grievance meeting with the individual after the investigation and before Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery reaches a decision.

In circumstances where a grievance is raised which relates to care and/or treatment of a child of Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery, all appropriate guidance will be followed in line with regulatory requirements in addition to following the process.

## **Right to be accompanied**

Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery will arrange a grievance meeting to be held usually within 7 days of the formal grievance being received. The individual who raised the grievance is entitled to be accompanied to this grievance meeting by a colleague or Trade Union Representative. The individual must, within reasonable time prior to the grievance meeting taking place, notify the manager with conduct of the grievance meeting who their intended companion is. If the individual or their companion are unable to make the meeting, the individual must inform their manager who has conduct of the grievance meeting, and a suitable alternative date for the meeting will be arranged.

Acting as a companion is voluntary and colleagues are under no obligation to do so. If colleagues agree to do so they will be allowed reasonable time off from duties without loss of pay to act as a companion. If the individual's chosen companion is unavailable at the time a meeting is scheduled and will not be available for more than five working days afterwards, they may be asked to choose someone else. At the meeting, the companion may make representations and ask questions, but should not answer questions on the individuals behalf. The individual and the companion may talk privately at any time during the meeting.

## **Grievance Meeting**

The purpose of the grievance meeting is to allow the individual the opportunity to explain their grievance along with their views on how they would like it to be resolved. The manager may then make a decision, taking into account what has been said and the outcome of any investigation that has taken place. Depending on the issues raised at the grievance meeting, it may be necessary to adjourn the meeting in order to undertake further investigation. The meeting will be re-convened once these investigations are complete.

## **Grievance Outcome**

The grievance manager will write to the individual, usually within 7 days of the conclusion of the grievance meeting, with the outcome of the grievance and details of any action they intend to take. Where an individual raises a grievance during a disciplinary process then, depending on the circumstances, the disciplinary process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance, although Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery is not required to do so. Where the grievance and disciplinary cases are related, it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

**Appeal**

If the individual is not satisfied with the outcome, they have the right to appeal the decision. The appeal must be:

- in writing
- detail the full grounds of appeal: and
- be provided within 7 days of the grievance outcome being communicated to the individual

Little Owls Pre-School and Nursery will then hold a grievance appeal meeting, usually within 7 days of receiving the notification of appeal and will appoint a manager who has not been previously involved in the grievance process to hear the appeal. Again, the individual has a right to be accompanied by a colleague or Trade Union Representative. The appeal outcome will be provided to the individual in writing, usually within 7 days of the appeal hearing. At this point there is no further right of appeal.