

## MAKING A COMPLAINT



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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

BEST Preschool believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our Preschool and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the Preschool. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns.

### **AIM:**

We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our Preschool to a satisfactory conclusion for all the parties involved.

### **BEST Preschool approach when dealing with parent complaints:**

Our Preschool may take one of the following approaches to resolve a parent's concern or complaint:

- an acknowledgement that the complaint is valid and is worthy of investigation (overall or in part).
- identification of areas of agreement between the parties involved.
- opportunities for all the parties involved to express their concerns, explain their point of view and clarify any misunderstandings.
- acknowledgement that the situation could have been better handled (this does not constitute an admission of negligence).
- an opportunity for an apology.
- recognition that the situation presents an opportunity for changes or alternate arrangements to be made to resolve the complaint.
- discussion with the parties about the steps that will be taken to ensure that the event complained about will not be repeated.
- an undertaking to review Preschool policy, procedures or practices.

## PROCEDURES

BEST Preschool is required to keep a written record of any complaints that reach stage 2 and above and their outcome. This is to be made available to parents as well as to BSO inspectors on request.

A complaint can come to the attention of the service in a variety of diverse ways:

- Contact, by phone or in person, with a staff member or by letter, email, and/or text.
- The complaint may be made by the person directly affected or by a person acting on their behalf.

### To whom a complaint can be made

If a parent has a complaint about some aspect of the service's activity, or about the conduct of an individual member of staff, it will often be possible to resolve the problem by simply speaking to the individual concerned and/or to the ***Head of Preschool or the Educational Coordinator***.

Complaints may fall more into the category of disagreements or differences of opinion and may be resolved through discussion and compromise on the part of both the person making the complaint and the staff member concerned.

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### Stage 1 - INFORMAL CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS, VERBALLY OR IN WRITING

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the Preschool's provision talks over, first, his/her concerns with the **Head of Preschool or Educational Coordinator**.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage, with **a response of 5 working days** to the parent.
- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or **if the problem reoccurs, the parent can move to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the Head of Preschool or Educational Coordinator**.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, the form may be completed with the person in charge and signed by the parent.
- The Preschool stores written complaints from parents in the child's personal file.

- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Complaints will usually only progress to the formal stage after first being considered at the preliminary stage, and only then if the complainant intends to escalate a matter to the formal stage. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, then the complaint moves automatically into Stage 2- formal resolution.

### Stage 2 - FORMAL RESOLUTION

- If the parent is not satisfied with the school, he or she requests a meeting with the Head of Preschool or the Educational Coordinator. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required, and the Educational Coordinator should have the support of the Head of Preschool.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made, as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All the parties present at the meeting will sign the record and receive a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.
- **a.** Where there is an investigation into the complaint necessary, the Head of Preschool or the Educational Coordinator may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the Head of Preschool or Educational Coordinator meets again with the parent to discuss the outcome. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.
- Parents must be informed of the outcome of the investigation **within 28 working days of making the complaint.**
- **b.** Where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made, BEST Preschool makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor/board and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, **within 15 working days since receiving parent's position on school response.**

### Stage 3 - PANEL HEARING

- Where the parent is not satisfied with the school's response to their complaint at **Stage 2** and indicates a wish to continue to **Stage 3**, a panel hearing will take place unless the parent later indicates that they are now satisfied and do not wish to proceed further.
- BEST Preschool ensures that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member-Mediator is independent of the management and running of the school; (independent=outside the school's workforce, not a member of the governing/proprietary body, not otherwise involved with the management of the school).
- The Mediator will be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.
- BEST Preschool allows for a parent to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish, still, this does not confer a right on a parent to have a legal representative to make representations on their behalf at the hearing, although the school can allow this if it wishes.
- If a parent does not exercise the right to attend a panel hearing, this does not remove the school's obligation to hold the hearing in conformity with this complaints policy.
- The school's arrangements for the panel hearing will be reasonable to facilitate the parents exercising the right of attendance.

The **panel hearing with the Mediator** has clear terms of reference, a clear process, and a direction to reach a final decision **within 28 working days:**

1. The Mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the Preschool personnel (Head of Preschool or Educational Coordinator) and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful to make findings and recommendations.
2. The Mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice s/he gives.
3. A copy of these findings will be provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about, and will be made available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Head of Preschool.

4. When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the Head of Preschool or the Educational Coordinator is held.
5. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator is present at the meeting if all parties think this will help them reach a decision.
6. A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, is made. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

### The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

- Parents may approach BSO directly at any stage of this complaint procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a breach of the Preschool's registration requirements, it is essential to involve BSO as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
- To make a complaint, you can contact the following:

Role	Name	Contact details
<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	Elena Voiculescu	0743230203 <a href="mailto:elena.voiculescu@bestpreschool.ro">elena.voiculescu@bestpreschool.ro</a>
<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	Anca Ilie	0743332329 <a href="mailto:anca.ilie@tiriacgroup.ro">anca.ilie@tiriacgroup.ro</a>
<b>Secondary Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	Corina Cantaragiu	0751967967 <a href="mailto:office@bestpreschool.ro">office@bestpreschool.ro</a>
<b>POLICE- Emergency line</b>		<b>112</b>
Emergency phone number to help abused children in Romania Sts.ro <a href="http://www.sts.ro">www.sts.ro</a> Serviciu de Telecomunicatie Speciale		<b>119</b>
<b>DIRECȚIA GENERALĂ DE ASISTENȚĂ SOCIALĂ ȘI PROTECȚIA COPILULUI</b> Str. Popa Tatu nr 78, sector 1		0722.707.022 0766.548.136

- These details are displayed on our Preschool's Office notice board.
- If a child is at risk, our Preschool follows the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board in our local authority.
- In these cases, both the parent and the Preschool are informed, and the Preschool leader works with BSO or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

### **RECORDS and CONFIDENTIALITY**

- A written record of all parents complaints against our Preschool and/or the children and/or the adults working in our Preschool is kept, following whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or proceed to a panel hearing; and action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaint Investigation Record. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential and available for parents/complainants and BSO inspectors on request.
- Records of complaints must be kept in the Complaints Records File, separate from children's files. All information relating to complaints is to be shared only on a need-to-know basis. Where a complaint involves a child protection concern, the Child Protection Policy will apply.
- Where a complaint involves an allegation of a breach of a person's rights (child or adult) and/or a criminal action or behaviour the appropriate authorities must be informed. The record of the complaint must be kept for at least two years from the date on which the complaint has been dealt with taking into consideration also the GDPR provisions.

### **The record is to include:**

- The name of the complainant.
- The nature and details of the complaint.

- The date and time the complaint was received.
- The way the complaint was received.
- The name of the person who received the complaint.
- The level of risk to the child or children arising from the subject of the complaint
- The way the complaint was dealt with, including: any local resolution implemented; any specific meetings held with the person making the complaint, and minutes of any such meetings.
- Timelines for investigation of the complaint and notification of the outcome to the person making the complaint.
- Details of the investigation carried out.
- The outcome of the investigation.
- Details of any corrective or preventive actions to resolve the complaint.
- Information given to the person making the complaint about the progress and the outcome of the complaint investigation, and whether the action taken to resolve the complaint was accepted.
- Details of any plan implemented for the child's care because of the complaint, as agreed with the child's parents/guardians.
- Details of any review of the risk management process, considering the complaint.
- Details of any changes to practice or policy.

### **Communication Plan [For staff & families]**

- All parents/guardians are to be informed of the policy and procedures regarding Complaints at enrolment, and the preschool will provide any assistance if needed.
- A summary of this policy will be included in the Parent/Guardian Handbook. This policy will also be reviewed with staff at induction and annual staff training. When a complaint is received, the person making the complaint will be given a copy of this Policy and Procedures.
- A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to staff members and parents/guardians.



- Parents/guardians may receive a copy of the policy at any time upon request.
- Parents/guardians and the staff team will receive written notification of any updates.

## **Appendix A - Complaints Form**

**Last review: August 2024**

**Name of signatory: DAN NICULAIE-FARANGA**

Role of signatory: permanent representative of the governor ITH MANAGEMENT OFFICE SRL

**Name of signatory: ANCA ILIE**

Role of signatory: Head of Preschool

**Appendix A****Complaints Form**

Please complete all sections of this form using block letters.

**Name of person making complaint:** .....

**Address:** .....

**Phone number:** .....

**Date & time complaint was first made**

**Date & time of incident:**

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**Name of person to whom the complaint was first made:**

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**Name of Registered Provider:**

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**Details of Complaint:**

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Please continue on an additional sheet, if required.

**Signature:** ..... **Date:** .....

**Please return to:** *Head of Preschool, BEST Preschool, 14th Jandarmeriei Street*

**Read by Head of Preschool/Educational Coordinator**

**Signature:** ..... **Date:** .....