

**Somerset Nursery School**  
**Complaints Policy**

	April 2016
Reviewed	June 2021
Due to be reviewed	June 2023

## EYFS: Statutory guidance and legal requirements

Registered providers must put in place a written procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents and keep a written record of complaints and their outcomes

Registered providers must investigate all written complaints relating to their fulfilment of the EYFS requirements and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint.

Registered providers must provide Ofsted, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint.

Providers must make available to parents and/or carers details about how to contact Ofsted, if they believe the provider is not meeting the EYFS requirements. If providers become aware that they are to be inspected, they must notify parents and/or carers. After an inspection, providers must supply a copy of the report to parents and/or carers of children attending on a regular basis.

The record of complaints should be kept for at least three years

## **Aims**

We aim always to work in partnership with parents, carers and other professionals in the best interests of the children.

We aim to be open fair and honest when dealing with any concern or complaint and to respect confidentiality.

We aim to give careful consideration to any concern or complaint.

We aim to resolve any complaints quickly whilst allowing time for full discussion.

We aim to resolve all complaints through dialogue and mutual understanding but recognise that we also need to provide an impartial or more formal route for complaints to be made.

Our Governors aim to be supportive in resolving any issues that may give rise to complaint and also to be fair open and honest with all involved.

## **Confidentiality**

At all times, all the parties involved with answering a complaint will treat any information they receive as confidential. They will only discuss the matter with those who need to know.

## **Our Complaints Procedure**

In developing and providing services there are times when we won't get it right and mistakes are made. It is important that parents/carers feel able to voice their concerns and that they will be listened to. We aim to deal with concerns in a positive way so that problems are resolved as quickly as possible.

### **First of all : Informal Complaints (Stage1)**

If you have any concerns about your child or the School/Children's Centre, please bring them to our attention as soon as possible. You can talk in confidence to any member of staff. (You will probably have to make an appointment to do this). This member of staff will refer the matter on to the Executive Headteacher. Alternatively, you can talk directly to the Executive Headteacher. You may be invited to attend an informal meeting to discuss the problem.

You are welcome to bring a friend or partner with you when you come to this meeting.

Please tell us what actions you think might put things right.

If your complaint is about the Executive Headteacher, you should raise the matter with the Chair of Governors.

Please allow us enough time to think carefully about your concerns; we will respond to you as quickly as we can. We will aim to reply to you within 5 school days and to give you our response within 10 working days.

### **Formal Complaints (Stage 2)**

If you feel that your complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved, you can make a formal complaint to the Executive Headteacher. This should be in writing. (Form attached)

The Executive Headteacher will acknowledge your complaint in writing within 5 days. She may outline her decision, along with any action to be taken, or she may ask you to come to a meeting to discuss your complaint.

The Executive Headteacher will keep a record of all discussions and decisions relating to your complaint.

If your complaint is an allegation of child abuse, we will follow the procedure outlined by the Local Authority in "Safeguarding Children, Policy and Guidance for Wandsworth Early Years" (2015)

### **How to take the matter further (Stage 3)**

If your formal complaint fails to resolve the matter to your satisfaction, you can lodge your complaint, in writing, with the Chair of Governors (contact details in the school booklet or

send to the school office).The Chair of Governors will also need you to tell him what action you have taken so far and what has happened.

The Chair of Governors will respond to you in writing within 15 days explaining his response to your concern, and any action that will be taken. If he has decided not to take any action he will tell you why this is so. He will also tell you how to lodge an appeal if you should wish to do so.

### **Appeals to the Governors**

If you wish to appeal against the decision of the Chair, the Governors will convene an appeals panel who will meet to carefully and fully consider your complaint and decide what action to take. They will do this within three weeks of your complaint. The members of the panel will not have discussed your complaint beforehand, with anyone. No-one on the panel will have any prior knowledge of your case. You will be invited to attend the meeting, with at least 5 days notice. The panel will make sure that you are made to feel as comfortable as possible at any meeting.

This is the procedure for the appeal hearing.

- The complainant and Executive Headteacher will enter the meeting together
- The Chair will introduce the panel members and outline the process
- The complainant will explain the complaint
- The Executive Headteacher and panel will question the complainant
- The Executive Headteacher will explain the school's actions
- The complainant and panel will question the Executive Headteacher
- The complainant will sum up their complaint
- The Executive Headteacher will sum up the School's actions
- The Chair will explain that both parties will hear from the panel within 5 working days
- Both parties will leave together while the panel decides
- The clerk will stay with the panel to clarify.

The Appeals panel will decide whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint, in full or in part, and decide on the appropriate action to be taken. They will also look at the evidence available and recommend changes to the School's systems or procedures to prevent similar problems arising in the future.

The Governors will do all that they can to resolve your complaint to your satisfaction.

The Panel's decision is final. If you are still unsatisfied you can write to the Director of Children's Services at the Town Hall.

Local Authorities are not part of the formal statutory process for school complaints, however Somerset School works closely with Wandsworth Local Authority and governors believe there can be value in using a mediation process for some complaints. Therefore, if both parties are in agreement, the Governing Board of Somerset School has agreed to offer Local Authority mediation at a stage before a complaint is escalated to the Secretary of State for Education.

Mediation is an effort to bring the two parties together; it does not formally reinvestigate and Wandsworth LA mediation service cannot impose a resolution to a complaint. Wandsworth's involvement in mediation shall be time limited to no more than six weeks and school term times will need to be taken into consideration. Should a resolution fail to be reached within this time period, you will be advised of your right to escalate your complaint to the Secretary of State for Education.

If you are still unhappy, you can write to the Chief Executive at the Town Hall, who will look at your complaint independently and make sure it is investigated.

**There are certain types of complaints about schools for which separate statutory arrangements exist. These include:**

- **content of the curriculum,**
- **school admissions**
- **temporary or permanent exclusions,**
- **home-to-school transport and**
- **special educational needs.**

If your complaint is about one or more of these issues, and you need advice, you can contact the:

Complaints and Information Team  
Department of Education and Social Services  
Wandsworth Council  
The Town Hall  
Wandsworth High Street  
SW18 2PU

Email: [childrenscomplaints@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:childrenscomplaints@wandsworth.gov.uk)

Telephone: 020 8871 7300 Freephone: 0800 389 8257/0800 587 7787 Fax: 020 8871 7675

For further information visit the WBC website:

[Council run schools](#)

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Executive Headteacher logs all complaints received and records how they were resolved. Governors examine the log annually. The policy and our procedure will be reviewed regularly and account taken of any changes that need to be made.

## **Criteria for monitoring**

Have any complaints been logged? Was the process followed and complaints resolved satisfactorily? Did all parties feel that they were treated fairly?

Are staff aware of any complaints that did not receive proper attention?

Have any LA guidelines changed, or addresses? (e.g. OFSTED)

Are parents aware of the complaints procedure?

Have there been any breaches of confidentiality?

## Formal Complaints Form

Somerset Nursery School and Children's Centre

**Name:**

**Contact details:**

**Phone:**

**Email:**

### Details of your complaint:

Please describe the nature of your complaint.

### Who did you approach to resolve your complaint informally?

Include staff name and date.

What action was taken to resolve your complaint?

### How do you propose the complaint be resolved to your satisfaction?

#### Where to return this form:

Executive Headteacher  
157-159 Somerset Nursery School and  
Children's Centre,  
Battersea,  
SW11 3ND

#### What happens next:

The Executive Headteacher will acknowledge your complaint in writing within 5 days. She may outline her decision, along with any action to be taken, or she may ask you to come to a meeting to discuss your complaint.