



## **Cairndow Community Childcare Limited Policy no.10** **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

This policy was written in conjunction with staff and committee of Cairndow Community Childcare Ltd.

The group is committed to delivering a quality service to all its members. It aims to take effective action to ensure standards are upheld and welcomes being informed where they have not been satisfactory.

The group believes a complaints procedure can contribute to the quality and effectiveness of the service. This policy document sets out a procedure for parents and carers to complain about any aspect of the group. Complaints should be made constructively and every effort will be made to resolve them at an early stage. It is in the best interests of all the parents, carers, children and the group that complaints are dealt with fairly and confidentially.

### **WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?**

A complaint is anything a parent or carer wishes to call a complaint. This can be about any aspect of the running of the group. As there is no strict definition of what constitutes a complaint, if there is any doubt, the parent or carer will be asked directly if he or she is making a complaint.

### **OPEN ACCESS**

Whatever the circumstances, staff or committee members will have a duty to inform parents and carers of their right to complain, including a right to appeal.

- The complaint will be fully investigated and acted upon.
- A complaint will always have a response.
- No member of staff or committee will be a judge in his/her own case.

Staff and committee members have the assurance that at all stages of the procedure they will be allowed to present their side of the case.

### **SWIF RESOLUTION OF THE COMPLAINT**

The committee shall, within 28 days after the date on which the complaint is made, or shorter period as may be reasonable in the circumstances, inform the person who made the complaint of the action (if any) that is to be taken. Delays will be avoided and times stated for dealing with complaints will be regarded as a maximum. If delays are unavoidable then the parent or carer will be informed of the delay, the reason for it and the revised timings. It should be remembered, however, that while responding to a complaint will be a matter of priority, it will not be at the expense of the need for understanding and fairness.

### **APPEALS PROCESS**

When a complaint is made, all parents and carers will be made aware that there is an appeals process. A parent or carer has the right to appeal if they are unhappy with the outcome of their complaint.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR REPRESENTATION**

Persons making the complaint will have the right to have the assistance of a friend, relative or representative to give support at different stages of the complaints procedure.

## **COMPLAINT PROCESS**

Complaint can be made to group staff or committee members. There are two ways in which they can be made and heard: informally and formally.

### **INFORMALLY**

The initial approach by a parent or carer may be on an informal basis. The staff or committee member will listen carefully and after discussion the situation with the parent or carer they should agree whether the matter:

- Has been resolved satisfactorily
- Should move to the formal complaint process

The staff or committee member will agree the course of action with the parent or carer and carry it out. When an informal approach is adopted the complainant should be kept informed by the relevant staff or committee member.

### **FORMALLY**

If the parent or carer wishes to make use of the formal procedure, then he or she should:

- Put the concerns or complaint in writing to the chairperson
- Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within ten working days
- Request a meeting with the group's owner or chairperson of the committee
- At the meeting have a friend, relative or representative present
- Have a written record of the discussion made and agreed

Most problems should be sorted out at this stage; if not then the appeals process will be followed.

## **APPEALS PROCESS**

If the parent or carer is not satisfied that the problem has been resolved, they should contact the same person the original complaint was sent to again in writing. If the parent or carer and group cannot reach agreement, an external mediator, acceptable to both sides, will be invited to listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help clarify the situation.

The mediator will:

- Help to define the problem
- Review the actions
- Suggest further ways which might resolve it
- Meet with the group if requested
- Keep an agreed written record of any meetings held and the advice given
- Keep all discussions confidential

In certain circumstances it will be necessary to involve the local authority and/or Care Commission if:

- A child appears to be at risk of any kind
- There appears to be a possible breach of registration requirements

In these cases the parents, carers and the group will be informed.

The local Care commission Office contact details are:

Paisley Piazza, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 1 Smithhills Street, Paisley. PA1 1EB Tel: 0141 843 4230

### **Complaints procedure.**

In order to maintain and improve the quality of service offered there must be methods for gathering information on all aspects of the provision. Anyone dissatisfied or concerned in any way has a right to voice their concerns and have them addressed. Procedures for raising and addressing concerns or complaints can contribute to the quality and effectiveness of the overall service. These are

- To publicize, make available and record the complaints policy and procedures.
- To inform parents of they're right to raise concerns and rights of appeal.
- To provide and make accessible a format for responses.
- To be aware that concerns or complaints will carry no reprisal.
- To deal with all issues raised without bias or prejudice and with respect.
- To offer opportunities for representation where appropriate.
- To always acknowledge receipt of the information.
- To state response times and adhere to them.
- To explain and display the role and details of the Care Commission.

It is the responsibility of the Nursery Nurse Supervisor along with the staff to monitor, evaluate and review the above arrangements and to adjust them according to need.