# Complaints Policy

**Our Aim**

Users of Gill Blowers Nursery School should expect to be treated with respect and without delay. We aim to give our customers an effective service at all times. One of the ways in which we continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our service users and stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints.

Therefore we aim to ensure that:

* Making a complaint is as easy as possible;
* We treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
* We deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
* We respond in the right way, for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc;
* We will provide information to parents on how to contact Ofsted if required;
* We learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.
* We will also provide parents a copy of the report after an Ofsted Inspection;

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:

* Resolve informal concerns quickly;
* Keep matters low-key;
* Enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred.

1. First raise your concern with your child’s teacher/keyworker or another member of staff.
2. If you are not satisfied, you can then raise the issue with the Head Teacher.

If the concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

**Definition:** Gill Blowers Nursery School defines complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction (with Gill Blowers Nursery School, or with a member of staff) that relates to Gill Blowers Nursery School and that requires a formal response.

**Purpose:** The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant’s satisfaction.

**The Head Teacher’s responsibility will be to:**

* Acknowledge the formal complaint in writing within 5 school days;
* Respond within 15 school days of having received the complaint;
* Deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
* Take action where appropriate.

**A complainant’s responsibility is to:**

* Raise concerns promptly and directly with a member of staff within Gill Blowers Nursery School;
* Bring their complaint, in writing where possible, to Gill Blowers Nursery School’s attention normally within 6 weeks of the issues arising;
* Explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
* Allow Gill Blowers Nursery School a reasonable time to deal with the matter;
* Recognise that some circumstances may be beyond Gill Blowers Nursery School’s control.

**Responsibility for action:** Head Teacher

**Confidentiality:**

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and Gill Blowers Nursery School maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint will be judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant and relevant policies will be followed.

Should a complaint/allegation be made about a member of staff or volunteer of Gill Blowers Nursery School, where it is deemed that a staff member has –

* behaved in a way which has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
* possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
* behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates that he/she is unsuitable to work with children.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be immediately informed and the guidance followed, will be in line with the LSCB Inter-agency Procedures (2010) ‘Managing Allegations and Concerns about Adults who Work with Children’. Available on the LSCB website at [www.lutonlscb.org](http://www.lutonlscb.org) and Gill Blowers Nursery School’s own policy on Managing Allegations and Concerns about Adults who Work with Children (2012)

**Having decided that the matter does/may meet the criteria for invoking the allegations management procedures the Head Teacher/Head of Centre will contact the LADO on 01582 548069 before taking any further action**

**Formal Complaints Procedure**

**Step 1 – Problem Solving:**

Complaints are often due to misunderstandings. When a complaint is first brought to the attention of a senior member of staff, they will seek to find a solution to the problem in a way that is acceptable to all those involved. However if it is not possible to resolve the problem in this way the formal complaints process will be followed.

**Step 2 – Formal Complaint:**

When a formal complaint is made, either in writing or verbally, to the Head Teacher receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged and a meeting held within 5 school days.

A written response will be sent by the Head Teacher within 15 school days, or investigated by the employing agency.

**Step 3 – Complaint to Chair of Governors:**

If the problem has not been resolved to the client’s satisfaction they may be entitled to put the complaint to the Chair of Governors. Your complaint will be acknowledged within 7 school days with a full response within 20 school days.

**Step 4 – Complaint to Governor Committee**

Write to the clerk of governors requesting that your complaint be heard by a complaints committee of governors. The committee of governors will review the complaint within 10 school days from receipt of your letter and make recommendations to the Head Teacher. The committee’s decision is final and you will be informed of this within 5 school days of the hearing.

If you are still not satisfied that your complaint has been properly dealt with –

Write to the Luton Lifelong Learning Department’s Performance Review Manager, giving evidence that the school did not follow its complaints procedure. Your complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days and tell you what will be done. The department will only investigate inappropriate procedure, not re-visit the complaint itself. A response will be made within 10 working days.

If you are not satisfied with the response, write to the Secretary of State for Education or the Local Government Ombudsman.

**Note.** If the original complaint was against the Head Teacher, the Chair of Governors will have responsibility to respond.

**Complaints Procedure Flowchart**

Discuss your concern with a member of staff

**STAGE ONE**

Head Teacher attempts to resolve the complaint informally within 5 school days

Written response within 15 days

**STAGE TWO**

***Complaint not resolved***

Referred to Chair of Governors

Chair’s decision to the complainant within 20 school days

**Complaint resolved**

No further action

**STAGE THREE**

***Complaint not resolved***

Ask for Governor Committee hearing

The committee will meet within 10 school days from receipt of letter. Decision is final within 5 school days after meeting

**PARENTS COPY**

**HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT**

Whether you are new to Gill Blowers Nursery School or have been using our services for a long time, you should expect to be treated with respect and without delay. We want to give an effective service at all times. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our service users and stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

**Step 1**

Complaints are often due to misunderstandings. Please tell the person you are dealing with or someone senior to them what the problem is. They will try to find a solution to the problem in a way that is acceptable to all those involved. Many problems can be sorted out like this. However if it is not possible to resolve your problem this way then you have the right to formally complain.

**Step 2**

The next stage is to tell Gill Blowers Nursery School Head Teacher at the following address:

Gill Blowers Nursery School

1 Mossdale Crt

Teesdale

Luton

LU4 9JL

Putting your complaint in writing is the best way of making your point. If you prefer you can make your complaint by telephone to **01582 575100/565797.**

Receipt of your complaint will be acknowledged within 5 school days.

Your complaint will then be investigated and you will receive a written response signed by the Head Teacher within 15 school days.

**Step 3**

If the problem has not been resolved to your satisfaction you may be entitled to put your complaint to the Chair of Gill Blowers Nursery School Governing Body. You can contact the Chair through the school office. The Chair will review your complaint and make recommendations to the Head Teacher.

Failure of the complaint to be resolved will result in the issue being taken up by either Luton Borough Council or any partner agency involved.

**Note.** If your original complaint was against the Head Teacher, the Chair of the Governing Body will have responsibility to respond.

**Confidentiality:**

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such, that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality. Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to you.

*Promoting equality, celebrating diversity and tackling discrimination*

**Key Related Documents:**

* Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012

**References:**

* Community Link Children Centre and Gill Blowers Nursery School Confidentiality & Records Procedure 2012
* Managing Allegations and Concerns against Adults who work with Children (LSCB Inter-Agency Procedures 2010)
* Gill Blowers Nursery School’s Managing Allegations and Concerns against Staff who work with Children 2012.
* Community Link Children Centre and Gill Blowers Nursery School Information Sharing Policy 2012