

Complaints policy and procedure

It is the policy of *Wenvoe Playgroup CIO* to share our achievements, reflect on our work and look for ways to improve our service.

We welcome suggestions and constructive criticism from all who use our service.

We avoid the potential for escalation of issues by responding to, recording and resolving complaints quickly, effectively; and where possible in a positive and informal manner.

We do this by:

- Operating an effective quality assurance process that includes seeking the views of parents/carers and others who may use our service about the way we work.
- Applying a similar approach to all suggestions, concerns and complaints by keeping records of dates and actions taken as an audit trail.
- Responding to comments, suggestions, concerns and complaints within specific time scales in line with relevant legislation and in a confidential and sensitive manner.
- Designating a complaints officer (*Person In Charge*) to work with complainants to produce satisfactory resolution at the earliest opportunity.
- Implementing a set of effective policies and procedures to protect those who are involved with our service.
- Ensuring that all staff are familiar with the complaints policy and procedure and confidentiality is maintained at all times.

Suggestions and concerns can be dealt with by:

- Speaking to the Person In Charge (a mutually convenient arrangement can be made to discuss any issues in confidence and outside operational hours).
- Emailing your suggestion or a hand written letter to the Person In Charge.

Any action taken in response to suggestions, comments and concerns is fed back either verbally, in writing or if appropriate by the person in charge placing a notice on the notice board about any changes made to operations as a result.

How to make a complaint about the service you receive at *Wenvoe Playgroup CIO*

In the event of a complaint please address your complaint to the Person In Charge

In all cases a written record of complaints is kept, which includes the following information:

- Name of complainant.
- Nature of complaint.
- Date and time of complaint.
- Action taken in response to complaint.
- Result of complaint investigation.
- Information given to the complainant, including the date of response.

At any time during the process of the complaint being resolved, the complainant has the right to complain to CIW or, where relevant, the local authority which has arranged for the care of a child at the provision.

The role of CIW in the complaints process:

CIW is happy to receive information about any social care service but is not a complaints agency and has no statutory powers to investigate individual complaints between people and their service providers. They cannot make judgments on behalf of people or decide who is right or wrong.

When CIW receives information about a service they will consider it and inform the complainant they will take one of the following actions:

- Undertake an inspection of the service within an identified timescale (a copy of the focused inspection report is sent to the complainant).
- Consider the information within the next planned inspection of the service.
- Advise the complainant to contact an identified agency.
- Refer the complainant to the service about which the complaint was made for resolution under their own complaints procedure.
- Advise the complainant that their information has been recorded and there is no further action required from CIW.

If the complaint is of a child protection nature: The Person In Charge must be spoken to without delay and the *Wenvoe Playgroup CIO's* child protection policy is implemented.

If the complaint is about the Person In Charge *then the Responsible Individual is informed in the first instance:*

Responsible Individual – 07724 827496

Email: wenvoeplaygroupcio@btinternet.com

Stage 2 of the procedure (see formal consideration page 5) must be followed and the local office of Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) is informed. CIW may ask for a verbal complaint to be followed up in writing.

Care Inspectorate Wales
Welsh Government Office
Sarn Mynach
Llandudno Junction
LL31 9RZ

Telephone: 0300 7900 126

Email : ciw@gov.wales

Website: careinspectorate.wales

How we respond to a complaint: in *Wenvoe Playgroup CIO* we aim to deal with complaints quickly and effectively 'in house' within the following process. This is called stage 1:

Stage 1: local resolution of a complaint (complaints are resolved within 14 days)

- The complaint is acknowledged within one working day.
- The complaint is investigated. The Person In Charge or Responsible Individual decides how best to do this in each case, but may involve:
 - Making arrangements for a meeting with all relevant parties to discuss the issues, when it is appropriate, and with the complainant's agreement.
 - Advising the complainant about the availability of advocacy to assist during the procedure.
 - A written record is made of the investigation, any discussion (including any witness statements) and any decisions or agreements made at any meeting.
 - A written report and draft response is made for the *chair of the management committee* and presented within 5 days of receipt of the initial complaint.
 - Complainant is sent a letter within **14** days of receipt of their complaint informing them that their complaint has been resolved, and of any action that has been taken as a result.
 - In certain circumstances, with the complainant's agreement, the 14 days can be extended for a further **14** days.
 - Complainant is also advised that if they are unhappy with this process or the outcome of the complaint they can contact CIW.
 - *Wenvoe Playgroup CIO* makes a written record of outcomes of the investigation, and any action taken.
 - A copy of the complaint record is kept for the *Wenvoe Playgroup CIO's* records and a summary is made available for CIW at their request.

If your complaint is not resolved by the stage 1 process above, you may resort to stage 2 (or in some cases you may want to go to stage 2 from the start).

Stage 2: formal consideration of a complaint (stage 2) - when the complaint is dealt with by an agency outside *Wenvoe Playgroup CIO*

The formal consideration can begin if either:

- The initial discussion (stage 1) has not been resolved and the complainant requests a formal consideration or;
- The complainant wishes to go straight to stage 2 from the start.

This decision rests with the person making the complaint¹.

- These types of complaints are resolved as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any event within **35** working days of the request for formal consideration.
- The outcomes of a formal consideration are confirmed in writing by the Person In Charge or Responsible Individual to the complainant and summarise the nature and substance of the complaint, the conclusions and the action to be taken as a result.
- A copy of a written response is sent by *the Person In Charge or Responsible Individual* to the appropriate office and to any local authority which has arranged for care for a child within *Wenvoe Playgroup CIO*. The time limit may be extended with the complainant's agreement.
- If the complaint has not been resolved within 35 working days of the request for formal consideration, the Person In Charge or Chairperson notifies the appropriate office of the complaint and reasons for the delay in resolution.

Where complaints are subject to concurrent consideration: a complaint may be part of another wider investigation where another agency is also making an investigation, such as child protection or staff disciplinary process.

In these circumstances, or where a complaint relates to any of the following matters:

- About which the complainant has stated in writing that they intend to take legal proceedings or;
- The Person In Charge or chairperson to the committee is taking, or proposing to take, disciplinary proceedings or
- About which the Person In Charge or chairperson to the committee has been notified that an investigation is being conducted by any person or body in contemplation of criminal proceedings.

The Person In Charge or Responsible Individual considers, in consultation with the complainant and any other relevant agency, how the complaint will be handled. In this case the Person In Charge or Responsible Individual may decide to discontinue investigating the complaint subject to concurrent consideration if:

- It appears that to continue would compromise or prejudice the handling of the wider investigation.

In which case, the Person In Charge or Responsible Individual:

- Informs the complainant of the decision to discontinue.
- Can resume the investigation at any time.
- Ascertains the progress of the concurrent consideration and notifies the complainant when it is concluded.
- Resumes consideration of the complaint where the concurrent consideration is discontinued or completed and the complainant requests that the complaint be considered.

At all times during any complaint investigation *Wenvoe Playgroup CIO* places safeguarding and protection of children as their highest priority.

This **complaints** policy and procedure was passed for use in *Wenvoe Playgroup CIO*

On: 16/10/23 reviewed (no change)

By: *Sandra Morgan* Position: RI/Person In Charge

Date of planned review: Annually or sooner if changes in practice /legislation