Springboard Sunderland Trust

Springboard Nursery

Concerns, Complaint and Allegation Policy

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Concerns, Complaint and Allegation Policy	
Category:	Springboard Nursery
Responsible Person:	Gemma Dunn
Accountable Person:	Jane Waggott
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Policy statement

At Springboard Nursery, we are committed to providing a welcoming, respectful and high-quality environment where children and families feel valued, listened to and supported. We believe that children and parents have the right to expect courteous, professional and responsive care, with their individual needs and wishes given careful consideration.

We warmly welcome feedback, suggestions and comments from children, parents and families, as these help us to continually review and improve the quality of our provision. Any concerns, complaints or allegations regarding the running of the nursery will be taken seriously, treated with sensitivity and addressed promptly and fairly.

We recognise that many concerns can be resolved quickly and effectively through an informal discussion with an appropriate member of the nursery team. Where a concern cannot be resolved in this way, we have clear procedures in place to ensure that all complaints and allegations are managed appropriately, thoroughly and confidentially.

Our aim is to work in partnership with families to reach a positive and satisfactory resolution for everyone involved, while maintaining the best possible outcomes for the children in our care.

Procedures

All settings are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond. This is to be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of Springboard Nurseries provision talks over, first, his/her concerns with the Nursery Manager, or Deputy Manager.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the settings Manager and the Chief Executive Officer of Springboard.
- In the event of an allegation the Manager or the Chief Executive will inform the Designated officer (DO) and follow their advice and guidance.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints in the complaints folder; the form may be completed with the person in charge and signed by the parent.
- The setting stores written complaints and allegations from parents in a designated folder. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, this will be stored in the Chief Executive's office.

- When the investigation into the complaint, allegation is completed, the Nursery Manager or Chief Executive meets with all parties involved to discuss the outcome.
- All parties must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint or allegation.
- When the complaint, concern or allegation is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Nursery Manager and the Chief Executive Officer. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the Manager should have the support of the chairperson of the management committee, or the proprietor/senior manager, present.
- 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 sign the record and receive a copy of it.
- This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three meeting the parent and setting cannot reach agreement, an external mediator is invited to help to settle the complaint. This person should 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.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (Manager and Chief Executive Officer) and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice s/he gives.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the Nursery Manager and the Chief Executive Officer is held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint or allegation. The mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator is present at the meeting if all parties think this will help a decision to be reached.
- 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, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP)

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaint's procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the setting's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted 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.
- The number to call Ofsted regarding a complaint is: 0300 1231231
- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures.
- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed, and the Nursery Manager works with Ofsted or the Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

The Role of the Designated Officer (DO)

Is to provide professional and practical advice to employers, organisations and other individuals who have concerns about the behaviour of an adult who works with children and young people. They have overall responsibility for the management of allegations of abuse against adults in a position of trust across the authority in accordance with statutory responsibilities set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

The referral procedure to the Designated Officer is as follows.

The DO should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed , a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

If the referral meets the criteria for DO involvement, the DO will:

- Arrange a Managing Allegations strategy meeting if one is required, liaise with the police and other agencies as necessary. If the case is complex, there may be a series of meetings.
- Ensure that child protection procedures are initiated where the child is considered to be at risk of significant harm
- Provide advice about sharing information re the individual against whom the allegation has been made, with children and their families and others
- Advise on whether the person should be suspended while investigations are undertaken
- Ensure employers are aware of their duty to notify the appropriate regulatory bodies and/or to refer the individual to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Records

A record of complaints or allegations against Springboard Nursery and/or the children and/or the adults working in our setting is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.

The outcome of all complaints and allegations are recorded in the Complaints File which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

This policy was adopted at	Springboard Nursery
Date:	27/07/2026
Date to be reviewed	09/08/2027
Signed by the manager	JWaggott
Signed by the signatory	SReay
Name of signatory	Steve Reay
Role of signatory	Chief Executive