Grievance Procedure

At Muddy Puddles Childcare we follow our legal obligations as an employer at all times including hearing and investigating grievances. We have the following policy and procedures that set out our process.

Legal obligations

Our obligations as an employer are detailed in the ACAS Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures. A full copy of the ACAS Code of Practice and the accompanying guidance can be obtained from the ACAS website https://www.acas.org.uk/

We note that a failure to follow the code does not, in itself, make an organisation liable to formal proceedings at an employment tribunal, but failure to follow the code may result in any compensation award payable to be increased by up to 25%, or reduced by 25% if the employee does not comply.

Objectives and guiding principles

We recognise that an employee needs to feel that his or her grievance has been fully investigated and has received a fair hearing. The employee also needs to understand the reasons for the decision made by the manager who heard their grievance. The employee should then be given the opportunity to appeal against the decision. Their appeal should be submitted in writing and should be investigated and heard by someone more senior to the person who heard the initial grievance. The person allocated to hear the employee's appeal should be able to take a fresh and independent look at the issue. In our organisation the manager deals with the grievance initially before being passed on to the Director of the nursery.

ACAS advocates the use of mediation to resolve grievances, in an attempt to maintain a good working relationship and resolve issues within the workplace. We may decide to use such mediation where appropriate using ACAS support and guidance.

Our grievance procedure does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. It may be amended at any time, and we may depart from it depending on the circumstances of any case.

This procedure applies to all employees regardless of length of service.

Our nursery believes that all employees should be treated fairly and with respect. We encourage all employees to try to resolve any grievance with the individual concerned on an informal basis, as most grievances can be resolved quickly through discussion. The nursery manager will assist you with this if you feel this is the best route for you.

If this does not resolve the complaint, issue or problem, you should initiate the formal process below.

Grievance process

Stage 1 Making your grievance

• You should put your grievance in writing and forward it to your manager

• This written statement will form the basis of any investigations and the subsequent hearing, so it is important that you set out clearly the nature of your grievance and any dates and names of individuals involved. You should also indicate the outcome that you are seeking. If your grievance is unclear, you may be asked to clarify your complaint before any meeting takes place

• If your complaint relates to an issue with the manager, the grievance may be sent to Victoria or Mark Shaw Directors

• Before proceeding to a full grievance hearing, it may be necessary to carry out investigations of any allegations made by you. If any evidence is gathered in the course of these investigations, you will be given a copy in advance of the hearing and appropriate time for you to consider your response. In exceptional circumstances, the evidence given by individuals may have to remain confidential. Where confidentiality is necessary, this will be explained to you and an appropriate summary of the evidence gathered will be given to you.

Stage 2 The grievance hearing

The hearing will be held as soon as is reasonably possible following any investigations, and within five working days of the receipt of your written complaint. It will be conducted by the manager or deputy manager if your complaint relates to an issue with the manager. You are entitled to bring a companion to the grievance meeting if you make a reasonable request to do so. This request must be in advance of the meeting and you should tell us the name of your chosen companion. The companion must be a work colleague.

You should ensure that you attend the meeting where possible. If you are unable to attend because of circumstances beyond your control, you should inform the manager as soon as possible and a further meeting will be re-arranged as soon as possible. If you fail to attend without explanation, or if it appears that you have not made sufficient attempts to attend, the hearing may take place in your absence.

During the hearing you will be given the opportunity to explain your complaint. Your explanations should focus on the complaint and not on irrelevant issues. The manager conducting the hearing will inform you if they believe the key issues are not being focused on. They may also set a reasonable timeframe for the meeting; this will be determined by the nature and complexity of your complaint.

The hearing may be adjourned to allow further investigations to take place. Following the meeting, you will be informed in writing of the outcome within five working days, where reasonably practicable, and told of any action that the nursery proposes to take as a result of your complaint, if applicable.

If it is anticipated that further investigation is required and therefore the outcome cannot be provided within this timeframe, we will inform you as to when you can expect to receive the outcome.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may make a formal appeal in writing to the nursery owner/director, stating your full grounds of appeal, within five working days of the date on which the decision was sent or given to you.

Stage 3

We will hold an appeal meeting within 14 working days of receiving the appeal, where reasonably practicable. This will be dealt with impartially by a director, where applicable who has not previously been involved in the case. You will have the right to bring a companion, as explained above.

We will confirm our final decision in writing, usually within seven working days of the appeal hearing, where reasonably practicable. There is no further right of appeal.

Grievances linked to disciplinary matters

Complaints that you may have about any disciplinary action taken against you should be dealt with as an appeal under the disciplinary procedure.

Grievances raised while you are subject to disciplinary proceedings will usually be heard when the disciplinary process has been completed.

If a grievance has any bearing on the disciplinary proceedings, it will be dealt with as part of the disciplinary hearing or disciplinary appeal, as appropriate.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for Review
02/02/2026	Heather Black	02/02/2027