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Document.	0004	Complaints Policy & Procedure		
Revision	03	Approved By	P Whateley	Approval Date 02/01/14

Scope

This policy applies to all provision for early years aged children, and also – where appropriate – to before and after school provision and walking bus provided by Duchy Pre-school and Playgroup for primary school aged children attending The Duchy School in Bowley Meadow.

Statement of intent

The Duchy Preschool & Playgroup aims to provide high quality education through play for all children attending. We work in partnership with parents and the community we are part of and provide a welcoming, positive setting for all to enjoy. We are supported in this by the Pre-school Learning Alliance and Devon County Council, through advice and training.

Our Pre-school & Playgroup believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our Pre-school/Playgroup and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the group. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns.

Aim

We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our Pre-school/Playgroup to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

How to complain

Stage 1

Any parent who is uneasy about an aspect of the Pre-school/Playgroup's provision talks over, first of all, his/her worries and anxieties with the Managing Supervisor, Mary Richards. If this is not possible, then the concerns or complaints should be referred directly to the Chair of Trustees under Stage 2.

Stage 2

If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to Stage 2 of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the Managing Supervisor and the Chair of the Trustees (or the chair of trustees alone in the event that the complaint is about the Managing Supervisor). The letter will be replied to promptly by the trustees stating how the

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complaint has been / will be dealt with.

Most complaints should be able to be resolved informally at Stage1 or at Stage2.

Stage 3

The parent requests a meeting with the Managing Supervisor and the Chair of the Trustees. Both the parent and the Managing Supervisor should have a friend or partner present if required. An agreed written record of the discussion is made. All of the parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy of it.

This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

Stage 4

If at the Stage 3 meeting the parent and Pre-school/Playgroup 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.

Staff or volunteers within the Pre-school/Playgroup Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.

The mediator keeps all discussion confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the Pre-school/Playgroup personnel (Managing Supervisor and Chair of the Trustees) 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 Managing Supervisor and the Chair of the Trustees is held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. 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.

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The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Area Child Protection Committee:

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of our registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the National Standards for Day Care are adhered to.

The address and telephone number of Ofsted is:

Ofsted Early Years,
 Piccadilly Gate
 Store Street
 Manchester
 M1 2WD
 Tel. 0300 123 1231 (Children's Services)
 Tel. 0300 123 4666 (Complaints)

These details are displayed on our Pre-school/Playgroup notice board.

If a child appears to be at risk, our Pre-school/Playgroup follows the procedures of the Area Child Protection Committee in our local authority.

We will work with Ofsted and all relevant authorities in these circumstances.

Records

A record of complaints against our group, the children and/or the adults working in our Pre-school/Playgroup is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed. This file is locked away in the filing cabinet.

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Responsibility for periodic review	Development Sub-committee
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Document History

Rev	Changes	Date	Approval
00	Previous changes incorporated for AGM	17/05/10	AGM
01	Change of Ofsted Address (statutory change)	30/06/11	M Richards
02	Review and re-approval for AGM	15/11/11	AGM
03	Addition of scope statement	02/01/14	P Whateley

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or downloaded!*

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