

# **Portobello Toddlers Hut**

Charity number: SCO 21068

## **Complaints Policy**

Policy adopted:

Signed:

**Complaints Policy**

Portobello Toddlers Hut (The Group) is committed to delivering a quality service to all its members. It aims to take effective action to ensure standards are upheld and maintained and welcomes being informed where they have not been considered to have been satisfactory.

As a member of SPPA the group believes a complaints procedure can contribute to the quality and effectiveness of the service. This policy document sets out a procedure for parents and carers to complain about any aspect of the group. Complaints should be made constructively and every effort will be made to resolve them at an early stage. It is in the best interests of all that complaints are dealt with fairly and confidentially.

### **What is a complaint?**

A complaint is anything a parent or carer wishes to call a complaint. This can be about any aspect of the running of the group. As there is no strict definition of what constitutes a complaint, if there is any doubt, the parent or carer will be asked directly if he or she is making a complaint.

### **Open access**

Whatever the circumstances, staff or committee members will have a duty to inform parents and carers of their right to complain, including a right to appeal.

- The complaint will be acted upon
- A complaint will always have a response
- No member of staff or committee will judge in his/her own case

Staff and committee members have the assurance that at all stages of the procedure they will be allowed to put their side of the case.

### **Swift resolution of the complaint**

Complaints will be resolved as quickly as possible since a complaint that is left unresolved for a lengthy period of time can be a source of conflict. If delays are unavoidable then the parent or carer will be informed of the reason for it. It should be remembered, however, that while responding to a complaint will be a matter of priority, the speed of response will not compromise the need for understanding and fairness.

### **Appeals process**

When a complaint is made, the complainant will be made aware that there is an appeal process. A parent or carer has the right to appeal if they are unhappy with the outcome of their complaint.

### **Opportunities for representation**

Persons making the complaint, ie the complainant, will have the right to have the assistance of a friend, relative or representative to give support at all stages of the complaints procedure.

### **Complaints Process**

How to make a complaint:

Complaints or concerns can be made to the group staff, committee members, SPPA or the Care Inspectorate at any time. There are 2 ways in which they can be made and heard: informally and formally.

#### ***Informally***

The initial approach by a parent or carer may be on an informal basis. The staff or committee member will listen carefully and after discussing the situation with the parent or carer they should agree whether the matter:

- Has been resolved satisfactorily
- Should move to the formal complaints process

The staff or committee member will agree the course of action with the parent or carer and carry it out. When an informal approach is adopted the complainant should be kept informed by the relevant staff or committee member.

### ***Formally***

If the complainant wishes to make use of the formal procedure, then he or she can put the concerns or complaints in writing to either:

The Chairperson, Portobello Toddlers Hut, 28 Beach Lane, EH15 1LW . Alternatively email addresses for committee members are available on notice board:

- Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within 10 working days by The Group
- Request a meeting with The Group's chairperson
- At the meeting have a friend, partner or representative present
- Have a written record of the discussion made and agreed

Or

The Care Inspectorate, Stuart House, Eskmill, Musselburgh, EH21 7PB.

Or

The SPPA, 21 Granville Street, Glasgow, G3 7EE.

Most problems should be sorted out at this stage; if not the appeals process will be followed.

### **Appeals process**

If the complainant is not satisfied that the complaint has been resolved, they should contact the same person that the original complaint was sent to again in writing. If the complainant and The Group cannot reach agreement, an external mediator, acceptable to both sides, will be invited to listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to clarify the situation.

The mediator will:

- Help to define the problem
- Review the actions
- Suggest further ways which might resolve it
- Meet with the group if requested

- Keep an agreed written record of any meetings held and the advice given
- Keep all discussions confidential

In certain circumstances it will be necessary to involve the local authority if:

- A child appears at risk of any kind
- There appears to be a possible breach of registration and requirements

In these cases the parents, carers and the group will be informed.

**This policy will be displayed in the policy file.  
All play workers and committee members will have a working knowledge of this policy.**

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Portobello Toddlers Hut on

Signed by:

Designation: