



COMPLAINTS POLICY

Setting: The Lodge

Organisation: PJ Creative Learning Ltd

Version: 1.0

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Introduction

At The Lodge, we are committed to creating a safe, respectful, inclusive and supportive environment for every learner. We recognise that concerns or complaints may arise, and we see these as an important opportunity to listen, reflect and improve.

We want parents, carers, professionals and members of the public to feel confident that any concern will be taken seriously, responded to with care, and handled in a fair and transparent way.

This policy sets out how concerns and complaints can be raised and how they will be managed. It also explains how safeguarding concerns are handled, recognising that these require an immediate and distinct response.

Raising a Concern

Most concerns can be resolved quickly through open and honest communication. Where possible, we encourage concerns to be raised directly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, so that they can be understood and addressed at an early stage.

Concerns may be shared in person, by phone or in writing. We aim to respond promptly and to work collaboratively with those involved to find a resolution. Our approach is always to listen carefully, understand the concern fully, and respond in a calm and constructive manner.

We recognise that raising a concern can sometimes feel difficult. Support will always be offered, and no concern will be dismissed or overlooked.

Formal Complaints

Where a concern cannot be resolved informally, it may be raised as a formal complaint. This should be provided in writing, outlining the nature of the concern and the outcome being sought.

Once received, the complaint will be acknowledged within two working days. It will then be reviewed carefully, taking into account all relevant information. This may involve speaking to those involved, considering records, and reflecting on practice.

A response will normally be provided within ten working days. Where additional time is needed, this will be communicated clearly, along with an explanation.

Throughout this process, the focus remains on fairness, clarity and resolution. Where a complaint is upheld, appropriate steps will be taken to address the issue and strengthen practice going forward.

Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding is always prioritised over standard complaint procedures. Any concern that relates to the safety or wellbeing of a child is treated as a safeguarding matter and responded to without delay.

Concerns can be raised by anyone, and it is not necessary to have proof. It is enough to share a worry or a sense that something is not right.

All safeguarding concerns are passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will consider the information and take appropriate action. This may involve contacting children's services, the police, or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The referring school or organisation will also be informed, in line with safeguarding responsibilities and information sharing arrangements.

The Lodge does not investigate allegations against adults independently. Such concerns are referred to the appropriate external authority without delay.

Where there is a risk of harm, safeguarding will always take priority over data protection considerations.

Escalation

If a concern or complaint has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the person raising it, there are clear routes for escalation. This may include contacting the referring school, Coventry Children's Services, the Local Authority Designated Officer, or the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.

We recognise that escalation is an important part of safeguarding and accountability, and it is supported where it helps ensure that concerns are fully addressed.

Confidentiality

All concerns and complaints are handled with sensitivity and respect. Information is shared only where it is necessary to do so, and always in line with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

We are mindful of the importance of confidentiality, while also recognising that information must be shared appropriately to protect children and ensure effective responses.

Recording and Learning

All concerns and complaints are recorded clearly and stored securely. These records are used not only to document what has happened, but also to support reflection and improvement.

Following a complaint, we consider what can be learned and whether any changes are needed. This may include updates to procedures, additional training, or adjustments to practice.

Our aim is to remain responsive, reflective and committed to continuous improvement.

Monitoring and Review

The Designated Safeguarding Lead reviews concerns and complaints regularly to identify any patterns or themes. This helps ensure that the provision remains safe, consistent and effective.

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to guidance or practice, to ensure it remains accurate and relevant.