

## **BENBURB COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP** **COMPLAINTS / COMMENTS POLICY**

### **PRINCIPLES**

#### **POLICYS STATEMENT OF INTENT**

We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all children attending the playgroup, and a warm welcome and caring environment within which all children can learn and develop as they play.

We intend to work in partnership with parents / carers to meet their needs and the needs of their children.

We welcome comments / suggestions on how to improve the playgroup.

We endeavour to quickly and informally resolve concerns through discussion with the appropriate member of playgroup staff.

All comments and complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and confidentially.

If a parent / carer, committee or staff member is not satisfied with any aspect of the playgroup provision and cannot informally resolve the issue they may then follow the playgroup complaints procedure.

#### **PROCEDURES:**

We will seek parents'/carers' views by:

##### **Comments:**

- Encouraging parents to place comments in the comments box which is labelled and situated outside the playgroup door
- Ensuring comments are shared with staff and Management Committee on a regular basis

##### **Complaints:**

We will ensure staff, parents and committee members are aware of the steps to take if they feel a complaint is necessary by

- Displaying this policy on the parents'/Carers' notice board
- Making available all policies in the policy file in the hall for parents'/carers', staff\* and committee members to read or borrow as they wish.
- Including the complaints procedure in staff\* and committee induction training.

##### **Parents: Making a complaint**

- Concerned parents/carers should firstly speak to the playgroup leader
- If the issue is not resolved or reoccurs the parent/carer should put their complaint in writing to the playgroup leader

- If this fails to resolve the issue a meeting may be requested with the playgroup committee and leader ( if appropriate ) by writing to the committee chairperson
- Both parties may have a friend / partner present and a written record of the meeting will be kept
- Most complaints are resolved at this stage – however should the parent/carer and playgroup fail to reach agreement an external mediator may be invited to help resolve the issue
- In some circumstances it may be necessary to involve Social Services if a child appeared to be at risk or there was a possibility breach of registration requirements. In this case a further investigation of the complaint would be carried out.

Committee members: Making a complaint

- Concerned committee member should firstly speak to the playgroup leader
- If the issue is not resolved or reoccurs the concerned committee member should put their issue in writing and bring to the attention of one of the three main office bearers.
- The office bearers will discuss the issue or concern, and decide if the member of staff in question needs to be spoken to at this stage.
- The committee will decide if the member of staff involved needs to be spoken to at this stage.
- Feedback will be given to the committee member.
- Further action required will be at the discretion of the management committee
- Most complaints are resolved at this stage – however should the committee member and member of staff fail to reach agreement an external mediator may be invited to help resolve the issue.

Staff\*: Making a complaint against a committee member

- Concerned staff should firstly speak to the playgroup leader
- If the issue is not resolved or reoccurs the staff member should put their complaint in writing to the playgroup leader, who will pass it on to one of the office bearers.
- If this fails to resolve the issue a meeting may be requested with the playgroup committee, concerned staff member and leader ( if appropriate ) by writing to the committee chairperson
- Both parties may have a friend / partner present and a written record of the meeting will be kept
- Most complaints are resolved at this stage – however should the staff member and the committee fail to reach agreement an external mediator may be invited to help resolve the issue

### **Conflict within the staff team**

Conflict within the team, can be very detrimental and therefore needs to be dealt with swiftly and effectively. Within a team it is realistic to assume that there will be times when staff have a difference of opinion.

The leader will endeavour to prevent conflict by..

- Ensuring 1-1 support is carried out every 6 weeks.
- Ensuring Appraisals are carried out annually.
- Providing rotas for staff.
- Reminding staff of their role and responsibilities.
- Reminding staff of the leader's role and responsibilities.
- Reminding staff of committee's role and responsibilities.
- Having weekly staff meeting.

### **Staff\*: Making a complaint against another staff member or the leader**

- Concerned staff should firstly speak to the playgroup leader.
- If the issue is not resolved or reoccurs the staff member should put their complaint in writing to the playgroup leader, the leader will discuss this with individual staff member(s).
- The leader will then discuss an action plan with all staff members involved as a group, at a time that is convenient (no longer than a week from the issue was raised).
- If this fails to resolve the issue a meeting may be requested with the playgroup committee, concerned staff member(s) and leader by writing to the committee chairperson
- Both parties may have a friend / partner present and a written record of the meeting will be kept
- Most complaints are resolved at this stage – however should the staff members fail to reach agreement an external mediator may be invited to help resolve the issue.

***Staff\* refers to staff, volunteers, students and trainees***

**This policy has been adopted by Benburb Playgroup Committee on:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**