



Little Crickets Forest School

Complaints Policy and Procedure

We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all the parties involved.

At Little Crickets Forest School, the care of all the children is our paramount concern and central focus. We believe that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, safe and careful attention to their needs and wishes. We hope that at all times parents are happy with the service provided and we encourage parents to voice their appreciation to the staff concerned.

We aim to work closely with all our parents to constantly improve our care and service. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our service and care and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the Forest School and how we can learn from them.

We hope that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff, and it is important that wherever appropriate that concerns are raised as soon as possible in line with the informal process. If this does not achieve the desired result or if the matter is not appropriate for an informal process, we have a clear formal procedure for dealing with your concerns.

We aim to bring all concerns regarding the running of our forest school to a satisfactory conclusion for all the parties involved. We aim to learn from all matters raised with us for the benefit of all the children using the Forest school, their parents / guardians and our staff.

We have a formal procedure for dealing with complaints where we are not able to resolve a concern. Where any concern or complaint relates to child protection, we follow our Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy.

Procedure

Informal Process – Stage 1

If you have a concern that can be dealt with informally, you should discuss this first on a confidential basis with your child's key worker. They will work with you to clarify the issue, investigate it if necessary and from there to resolve the issue that you have raised and acting where appropriate to correct the issue that you have identified.

Formal Processes

Reviewed: November 2025 ES

Reviewed: November 2026 ES

Stage 2

- If you are not satisfied with the response from the informal stage or if you have a concern which is too serious to be raised at an informal level, you should raise your concern in writing to the Forest school Manager.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, please discuss the issue with the Manager, they will record a written summary of your complaint and you will be asked to sign to verify this is an accurate detail of your complaint.
- The Manager will meet with you to discuss your complaint and following this carry out an investigation into the issues that you have raised if this is applicable.
- The Manager will meet with you again if this is necessary and write back to you confirm the outcome of the formal complaint process. This will normally be within 28 days of the first meeting with you.

Stage 3

- Stage 3 – Complaints Panel If you remain dissatisfied, you may request a panel hearing via Louise Krier- Forfar Education. A panel of three people (including one independent member) will review the process followed in Stage 2. New concerns cannot be raised at this stage. You can also be accompanied, if you wish. The panel will meet within 28 working days of the request. Their final decision, with any recommendations, will be shared in writing within 10 working days.
- This is the final stage of the complaint process within the Forest school structure.

Data Protection Complaints

Where a complaint concerns the School's processing of personal data, including the collection, use, storage, disclosure, retention, security or accuracy of personal information, the School will treat the matter as a data protection complaint and investigate it in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

Individuals may raise a data protection complaint using the School's normal complaints procedure or by contacting the School's Data Protection Lead.

The School will:

- acknowledge receipt of the complaint without undue delay;
- investigate the complaint appropriately and proportionately;
- keep records of the complaint, investigation, outcome and any remedial action taken;
- inform the complainant of the outcome and any actions taken by the School; and

- advise the complainant of their right to raise concerns with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) if they remain dissatisfied.

Personal information supplied as part of a complaint will be processed only for the purposes of investigating, responding to and resolving the complaint and will be handled in accordance with the School's Privacy Notice and records retention procedures.

A written record is kept of all formal complaints, whether resolved at the formal stage, panel stage or withdrawn. Records include the action taken by the School as a result of the complaint, regardless of whether the complaint is upheld. Complaint records are retained in accordance with the School's Records Retention Schedule and applicable data protection legislation and are kept confidential except where disclosure is required by law or regulatory obligation.

If a complainant remains dissatisfied following the conclusion of the School's complaints process, they may contact the Information Commissioner's Office:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Website: <https://ico.org.uk>

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and PAN Dorset Safeguarding Partnership.

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaint's procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the Forest school's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.

The number to call Ofsted with regard to a complaint is: 0300 123 4666. These details are also displayed available online.

If a child appears to be at risk, we will follow the procedures of MASH team in our local authority as we are required to do. In these cases, both the parent and Forest school are informed and the Designated Safeguarding Lead work with Ofsted or PAN Dorset safeguarding partnership to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.