All parent/carer policies and procedures should be available to share with families so that they can make an informed decision about their childcare arrangements.

It is good practice to ensure these documents are available in a typed format and include a version date/number and review date.

A Complaints Policy must be submitted with other documentation for a provider to become an Approved Provider to offer Early Education. A provider may choose to combine policies for Early Education to reduce the admin burden, and therefore we expect the requirements to be stated in at least one policy which is written for and shared with families.



**Your Complaints Policy**

Your setting is unique, your Complaints Policy must clearly describe how families can complain and how a complaint will be managed or signposted.

For your Funding Agreement Documentation, your Complaints Policy must clearly articulate compliance to the Statutory Guidance and Funding Agreement in relation to how a family can complain and how this will be dealt with.

It must describe where families should direct their concerns regarding the funding entitlement.

All policies will be compliance checked prior to a provider being Approved.

As a minimum your policy should include –

* details on how a complaint or concern will be dealt with
* the stages of the process
* timescale
* how it will be addressed
* how it will be recorded
* to whom the complaint can be addressed

It is recommended that a section is included for the following –

* when there is a concern about how personal information is handled, if it is wrong, lost or shared without consent. Further guidance can be found here <https://ico.org.uk>
* about the use of social media and how families can address their concerns

If parents/carers have a concern about what they have heard or seen in your setting, then this should be raised with yourselves in the first instance. If you cannot resolve the matter in this way, or there are **safeguarding concerns**, then **Ofsted must be contacted on 0300 123 4666**

Issues about the way in which the funding entitlement is offered should also be addressed to you initially. The Local Authority **will** intervene where the complaint refers to Early Education and the funding entitlement offer is not compliant with legislation, other published statutory guidance and government advice.

The Local Authority will **not** intervene where parents choose to purchase additional hours of provision or additional services providing that this does not affect the parent’s ability to take up their child’s funded place.

Example: Stages of a Complaints Procedure

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Safeguarding Issue | STAGE 1  Minor Complaint | STAGE 2  Greater Concern | STAGE 3  Not  Resolved |
| Refer to Ofsted  **( 0300 123 4666** | Informal:  Concern to be addressed by Key Worker or Room Leader | Formal:  Concern to be put in writing to Manager/Owner   * Evidence Required * Response Time * Action * Record | Inform Ofsted  Inform the Local Authority  *(if related to the Early Education funding entitlement)* |

**Compliance Check**

When submitting your Policies for a compliance check, the Early Years Finance team will review the content of each policy to ensure that it meets the requirements of the Funding Agreement and Statutory Guidance for Early Education and Childcare.

Please refer to the [Compliance Check Guidance](https://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/media/41860/Compliance-Checks-Guidance/doc/t7GUIDANCE_-_Compliance_Checks.docx?m=1750856370783) for suggested wording to add to your Complaints policy.