



## Complaints Policy

### **Rationale and Policy Considerations**

The Complaints Policy in relation to a School Aged Childcare Service means a policy setting out the procedures for both making and dealing with complaints about any aspect of the service.

A clear and effective Complaints Policy is an important part of providing a quality service. Even where every effort is made to meet quality standards, those who use a service may not always feel satisfied with the type, level or quality of the service that is provided.

Although complaints can be difficult to receive and respond to, acting on a complaint appropriately, efficiently and promptly can help upgrade service quality and is important for the reputation of the service and to help ensure positive relationships.

The goals of this policy are to ensure that:

- Anyone who comes into contact with the service will be assured that if they ever have a comment to make or need to make a complaint it will be welcomed and responded to appropriately.
- Parents or guardians are informed about the Complaints Policy and Procedures at registration/enrolment.
- All staff members are aware that if they receive a complaint there is a clear and specific procedure in place to deal with it in a confidential manner.
- Complaints are taken seriously, resolved efficiently and effectively, and recorded appropriately.

## **Legislation and regulatory requirements**

Having a clear, written policy and procedure on complaints is a requirement of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Registration of School Age Services) Regulations 2018.

The Club Spraoi Complaints Policy including the Child Friendly Complaints Policy is available at all Club Spraoi Services and is communicated to all parents, guardians and school age children upon registration. The Policy is also available on the Club Spraoi website, on the Policies page.

Club Spraoi welcome and value children's and families' views of the service. We understand that from time to time families will have a concern or feedback about the service and we are dedicated to giving careful attention and a courteous timely response to all suggestions, comments or complaints.

**Principle:** This policy is underpinned by the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006 and National Standards for Preschool Services.

### **Comments / Feedback Procedure:**

- 1.All comments are welcome and can be shared with any member of the team
- 2.A comment can be made verbally to team member and in the event of an unsatisfactory result the comment should be made in writing to the Coordinator.
- 3.The Coordinator will make a note of these in the Comments Book, along with any action taken.
- 4.The complaints procedure should be availed of if a satisfactory response is not received within a reasonable time (2 weeks).

### **Complaints Procedure:**

1. If you wish to make a complaint you should contact the Coordinator to discuss and, hopefully, resolve the matter.

2. Should you still feel that the matter is unresolved then the complaint must be put in writing to the Coordinator.
3. A written acknowledgement of the complaint will be sent within 3 working days.
4. If the complaint is related to the behaviour of a member of staff, the staff member must be informed that a formal complaint has been made and be given the full details and the right to reply.
5. Parents/guardians/carers must be made aware that staff are informed of complaints made relating to their behaviour so that the procedure can be implemented.
6. If required a request may be made in writing to the Coordinator to have the complaint heard by a wider group. This group could comprise of the owner Priscilla McCann plus an external mediator.
7. Membership of this panel should not comprise of any person directly involved in the complaint or related to the complainant, or staff member.
8. The person making the request should be advised that, they are free to bring another person with them to a meeting to hear the complaint, to act as a scribe/record minutes.
9. Following the request, the complainant must be facilitated with a meeting within one month.
10. An agreed written record of the meeting will be kept by the external mediator and, where appropriate, a formal letter of the outcome will be issued, within 5 working days of the meeting.
11. In instances where the complaint involves the welfare of a child/children, the information should be made known to the relevant local Duty Social Worker in the Health Service Executive.

**Any complaints not within the scope of the service to investigate, will be referred appropriately. For example:**

- If the Coordinator has good reason to believe that the situation has Child Protection implications, they must inform the designated Child Protection Officer, and ensure

that the local Tusla Duty Social Worker is contacted, according to the procedure set out in the Child Protection Policy.

- If any person involved in the complaint has good reason to believe that a criminal offence has been committed, they should contact An Garda Síochána.

### **Communication of the Response/Outcome**

The formal response to the complaint will be sent from Club Spraoi to the person who made the complaint and copied to all relevant members of staff if appropriate. The response will include recommendations for dealing with the complaint and any necessary amendments to the service's policies and/or procedures and/or risk management procedures, arising from the investigation.

The Coordinator may arrange a time to meet the person who made the complaint and any other relevant individuals, such as members of staff, to discuss the complaint and the service's response to it. The Coordinator will judge if it is best for all parties to meet together or if separate meetings are more appropriate.

The person making the complaint will be notified of the progress of an investigation on an ongoing and regular basis by the manager in writing, by email or letter.

The person making the complaint will be immediately informed of the outcome of the complaint once it has been completed.

### **Recording of Complaints and Confidentiality**

Records of complaints must be kept in the Complaints Records File, separate from children's files. All information relating to complaints is to be shared only on a need-to-know basis.

Where a complaint involves a child protection concern the Child Protection Policy will apply.

Where a complaint involves an allegation of a breach of a person's rights (child or adult) and/or a criminal action or behaviour the appropriate authorities must be informed.

The record of the complaint must be kept for at least two years from the date on which the complaint has been dealt with. [This period may vary depending on other legal requirements.]

The record is to include:

- The name of the complainant
- The nature and details of the complaint
- The date and time the complaint was received
- The manner in which the complaint was received
- The name of the person who received the complaint

### **Review**

If, at the conclusion of the above process, those who made a complaint are dissatisfied with the response they have received, the original complaint along with the service's response will be passed to the Owner Priscilla McCann who will ensure that there is a complete review of the complaint. This review will be undertaken by a person not previously involved.

Priscilla McCann will communicate a detailed response, including any actions to be taken, to both the Coordinator and the person who made the complaint.

**This policy was adopted by Club Spraioi on: 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019**

**Signed by:** Priscilla McCann (Owner)

**Review Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020



## **“I’m unhappy about something”**

If you are a child who comes to Club Spraoi before or after school, and you are unhappy about anything that is happening here, then you have the right to complain about it. To do that you need to contact us so that we can try to put things right as soon as possible.

### **So what do I do next?**

Tell Us!

The first step in sorting out a problem is letting us know. You can complain yourself or you may want someone you trust to help you make the complaint; someone who will help you express your wishes and feelings or point of view. Most of your problems can be sorted out easily and quickly once they have been shared.

To make a complaint you can contact a Club Spraoi staff member or the Owner Priscilla McCann (contact details at bottom of page) whose job is to listen to you, support you through the complaint as well as manage the complaint.

Don’t be afraid to complain. We will take your complaint seriously. You may contact us in any way you choose - remember you don't have to write it down. You have a right to complain in the best way for you, by talking to someone by phone or face to face, on-line, by text or by email.

At each stage of the complaint process, we will make sure that you are given feedback on what is happening with your complaint. The manager may need to speak to you and others who may be involved.

The manager will listen and try to solve the problem. You will also receive a reply telling you how things have been sorted and what you can do if you are still unhappy about things.

### **How long will it take?**

We will try to resolve your problem within 14 working days. Some complaints will take longer. In this case we will let you know if we need more the time to deal with the complaint.

### **What if I am unhappy with the reply?**

If you are not happy about the way your complaint has been dealt with or the reply you received from Club Spraoi so far, you need to tell the Club Spraoi Owner Priscilla McCann, who will either look into this or ask somebody else to do so. She will speak to you about your complaint, and talk to anyone else that is involved in the complaint, if needed. When the Priscilla has received all the information, she will be in touch with you to let you know the reply.

### **How long will this take?**

We will do our best to respond to you within 14 days. If this is impossible (for example when a person is on holidays) we will be in touch with you to explain the delay.

### **What if I am still unhappy or do not wish to deal with Club Spraoi, HSE or Tusla - who else can I talk to?**

If you are still unhappy or unhappy at any stage you may contact the Ombudsman for Children at any stage. Or you may decide to do so at any stage of the process.

## **People to contact:**

### **Priscilla McCann:**

**Email:** info:clubspraoui.ie

**Phone:** 086 379 1010

**Address:** 11 Rosemount, Heronswood, Carrigaline, Co.Cork

### **Ombudsman for Children:**

**Phone:** 1800 20 20 40



## Complaints Form

Please complete all sections of this form using block letters.

**Name of person making complaint:** .....

**Address:** .....

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**Phone number:** .....

**Date & time complaint was first made:**

**Date & time of incident:**

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**Name of person to whom complaint was first made:**

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**Name of Registered Provider:**

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**Details of Complaint:**

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Please continue on an additional sheet if required

**Signature:** ..... **Date:** .....

**Please return to:** *[Name], Manager [insert service name and address]*

**Read by Manager**

**Signature:** ..... **Date:** .....