



Complaints Policy



How we listen, investigate and resolve concerns raised by parents, carers and the wider community
 Play Days Nursery Limited | Play Days Academy Limited • Form Reference: PD-COMP-MAY26 | EYFS 2026

We welcome the conversation

Play Days exists to provide a stimulating, safe and joyful environment for every child in our care. We work in partnership with parents and carers, and we take that partnership seriously — which means we expect your honest views, and we welcome them, including when they are difficult to hear.

Most concerns will be resolved with a quiet word at the door, between you and your child's key person. Some will need a longer conversation, and a small number will need a formal investigation. Whichever it is, our promise to you is the same: we will listen, we will take it seriously, we will be honest with you, and we will tell you what we are going to do about it.

If something is not right, please tell us. We would much rather hear it from you, early, than read it elsewhere later.

Imelda Rylatt, Company Director — Play Days Nursery & Academy

1. Our Commitment to You

Play Days is committed to providing the highest standard of care, fostering open relationships with every family, and acting promptly and fairly on any concern raised about our setting, our staff, or our practice.

- We treat every concern as an opportunity to improve.
- We do not penalise, nor allow our staff to penalise, a child or family for a complaint raised in good faith.
- We maintain confidentiality throughout, in line with our GDPR & Data Protection Policy.
- We share the findings of our investigation with the parent or carer who raised the complaint, in writing, within statutory timescales.
- We keep a record of every complaint relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage, available for inspection by Ofsted.

2. Who Can Raise a Complaint

Anyone can raise a concern about Play Days. The processes below apply most directly to:

- Parents and carers of children currently in our care.
- Parents and carers of children formerly in our care, where the complaint relates to the period of care.
- Members of staff, where the matter is not covered by our Whistleblowing Policy.
- Visitors, contractors, members of the wider community and other agencies.

Anonymous concerns are accepted and investigated to the extent that is practical given the absence of a return contact.

3. Our Four-Stage Process

Most concerns are resolved at Stage 1. We move to a later stage only where the matter is unresolved, more serious, or where the person raising it asks us to.

Stage	How it works	Timescale
Stage 1 Informal conversation	With the child's key person, room leader, or a senior member of staff on duty.	Same day where possible, within 3 working days at the latest.
Stage 2 Formal verbal complaint	Raised with the Nursery Manager or Deputy Manager, who will speak with the parent or carer, gather information and respond.	Outcome communicated within 7 working days.

Stage	How it works	Timescale
Stage 3 Formal written complaint	Submitted in writing (letter or email) to the Company Director. Investigation logged on the Complaint Investigation Form (PD-CIF-MAY26). Findings shared in writing with the complainant.	Outcome within 28 days of receipt for matters relating to the EY Register; within 20 days for matters relating to the Voluntary or Compulsory Childcare Register.
Stage 4 External referral	Where the matter remains unresolved, or where the complainant prefers, the complaint may be referred to Ofsted. Ofsted contact details are set out in Section 7. Some matters — for example, safeguarding allegations — will be referred to the LADO and/or Children's Social Care without progressing through earlier stages.	Ofsted and other external bodies operate their own timescales.

4. Statutory Timescales

EYFS regulations require providers to give parents an account of the investigation findings and any action taken within statutory timescales. These are non-negotiable deadlines that we treat as maximums, not targets:

Complaints relating to the Early Years Register	Written outcome to the complainant within 28 days of receipt.
Complaints relating to the Voluntary or Compulsory Childcare Register	Written outcome to the complainant within 20 days of receipt.
Complaints concerning a child's immediate safety	Acted upon immediately. Referred to LADO and/or Children's Social Care without delay, in parallel with our internal investigation.
Complaints concerning an allegation against a member of staff	Referred to the LADO within one working day. The internal investigation will be paused or directed as instructed by the LADO.

5. Records and Retention

Every complaint relating to the EYFS is recorded on the Complaint Investigation Form (PD-CIF-MAY26), which captures the source of the complaint, its nature, how it was dealt with, and any actions taken. Records are:

- Stored securely by the Company Director and accessible only to those with a legitimate need.
- Available to any parent of a child in our care, on request, in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the EYFS statutory framework. Personal identifiers (names of staff, children, complainants) are redacted before sharing.
- Made available to Ofsted at inspection.
- Retained for a minimum of three years from the date of the complaint, or in line with our Data Retention Schedule, whichever is longer.

6. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Confidentiality	Complaints are discussed only with those who have a legitimate need to know. Where the complaint involves an allegation against a member of staff, the staff member will normally be informed at an appropriate stage, but the identity of the complainant is protected wherever possible.
Names in the record	When completing PD-CIF-MAY26, we use "Child A", "Staff Member B" and similar designations rather than naming individuals. This protects everyone involved and means the record can be shared with another parent on request without breaching confidentiality.

GDPR overrides	Where there is a safeguarding need, the protection of children takes precedence over general GDPR parameters. Information may be shared with the LADO, Children's Social Care, the Police, and Ofsted without parental consent in those circumstances.
Right of access	Any individual may request access to information held about them by Play Days under data protection law. Such requests are passed to the Company Director and handled within statutory timescales.

7. Contacting Ofsted

Parents and carers have a right to contact Ofsted at any point, with or without raising the matter with us first. Ofsted's contact details are:

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

General helpline: 0300 123 1231

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Online complaints form: www.gov.uk/complain-ofsted-childcare-school

Note: Where Ofsted refers a complaint back to us in the first instance, we will treat it as a Stage 3 complaint and respond within statutory timescales. Where Ofsted carries out its own investigation, we will receive notification of the outcome.

A final word

A complaint, raised in good faith, is one of the most useful things a parent can offer us. It tells us where we have fallen short of what we promised, and it gives us the chance to put it right. Thank you for trusting us enough to tell us.
Imelda Rylatt, Company Director — Play Days Nursery & Academy

8. Where a Complaint Becomes a Safeguarding Matter

Not every complaint is a safeguarding matter, but some are. Where a complaint contains an allegation against an adult that meets the threshold for a LADO referral — broadly, where an adult is alleged to have behaved in a way that has harmed, may have harmed, or might harm a child — we follow our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Allegations Against Staff procedure.

Our priority is the child.

If the matter you have raised relates to a child's safety, please tell us straight away. We will not let process get in the way of acting quickly to protect a child, and we will keep you informed of what we have done as fully as confidentiality allows.

9. Cross-Referenced Documents and Policies

Complaint Investigation Form Ref: PD-CIF-MAY26	Tiered Incident Record Ref: PD-IR-MAY26	Low-Level Safeguarding Concern Record Ref: PD-SG-LL-MAY26
Chronology Record Ref: PD-CHR-MAY26	Low-Level Concerns Policy Ref: PD-LLC-MAY26	Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Policy
DSL Policy Policy	Whistleblowing Policy Policy	GDPR & Data Protection Policy Policy
Confidentiality & Information Sharing Policy	Allegations Against Staff Procedure Policy	Data Retention Schedule Policy

10. Legislative & Regulatory Framework

EYFS Statutory Framework 2026	Childcare Act 2006	Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
Children Act 1989 and 2004	Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026	Equality Act 2010