All Silver Stars Day Nursery policies will be subject to any future change according to Government legislation and guidelines to maintain the safety of all children, families, staff and visitors.

1.10

Concerns and Complaints

Who can make a complaint?

This complaint procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at the setting. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to Silver Stars Day Nursery about any provision of facilities or services that we provide.

Anyone who has cause or serious concern as to a matter of safety or quality of care must report the matter immediately to Ellie Wallace, Nursery Manager. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the manager may escalate this to Jenifer Capper, Designated Senior Person, and the Proprietor of Silver Stars Day Nursery.

If the Nursery Manager or her Deputy has good reason to believe that the situation has child protection implications, this will be escalated they may decide to involve ART, according to the procedure set out in the Child Protection policy. If any party involved in the complaint has a good reason to believe that a criminal offence has been committed, then they will contact the police.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A concern may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'.

A complaint may be defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'.

In the case of concern, we will give prompt and serious attention. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, Silver Stars Day Nursery will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaint's procedure.

Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, Silver Stars Day Nursery wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- an explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
- an apology.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

Complaints Procedure

The procedure set out below has five stages, should they be needed. It is intended that it satisfies the setting's aim to provide the quality of care of which it can be proud.

Time scales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Proprietor will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

Parents/carers also have access to OFSTED* as the ultimate authority for matters related to day-care provision

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks over his/her concerns with the Nursery Manager who will deal with the matter or refer it to the DSP if necessary.
- The Nursery Manager (or Deputy) will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the DSP.

- The DSP will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. In most cases the DSP will meet the parents concerned, normally within five days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If necessary the DSP will carry out further investigations.

- Silver Stars Day Nursery stores written complaints from parents in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the DSP may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.

- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the DSP meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.

- Once the DSP is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of the decision in writing. The DSP will also give reasons for his/her decision.

- Parents must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 working days of making the complaint.

- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Summary log

Silver Stars Day Nursery is required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond. This is to be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the Proprietor. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the DSP/Proprietor should have the support of a senior manager present.

- An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All of the parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy of it.

- This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three meeting the parent and DSP/Proprietor cannot reach agreement, a panel of at least three external mediators are invited to help to settle the complaint. These people should be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice. Mediators have no legal powers but can help to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.

- Mediators keep all discussions confidential. They can hold separate meetings with the DSP/Proprietor and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful. Mediators keep an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice given. In line with current data protection legislation, all records will be handed over to Silver stars Nursery on completion of Stage 4. Personal records made by mediators must be deleted or securely destroyed.

Stage 5

- When the panel has concluded their investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the setting's manager and the DSP/Proprietor is held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediators' advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediators are present at the meeting if all parties think this will help a decision to be reached.

- A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, is made. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by Silver Stars Day Nursery, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Who to contact
• Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation	Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance. If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact Jon Goddard **01454 868 724** the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
• Whistleblowing	We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors. Volunteer staff who have concerns about our nursery should complain through the nursery's complaints procedure.
• Staff grievances	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the nursery's internal grievance procedures.

• Staff conduct	Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the nursery's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.
• Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use nursery premises or facilities	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

If a complainant commences legal action against Silver Stars Day Nursery in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

Allegation of abuse against a member of staff

In the case of the above the same procedure will be followed as in the case of concern for the care of a child.

Note: Complaints about staff conduct will not generally be handled under this complaints procedure.

Complainants will be advised that any staff conduct complaints will be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with them.

Concern or complaint from a member of staff

If a member of staff has cause for complaint against a parent, a child or another member of staff this will be referred to the Nursery Manager/DSP immediately.

If appropriate the same procedure will be followed as above.

If the accusation is more serious the member of staff and the DSP/Proprietor may deem it necessary to inform the police.

This will be done without delay.

Note: Most complaints from staff will generally be dealt with under the setting's internal grievance procedures

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the setting'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 displayed on the parent's notice board. Parents can contact Ofsted via email or online.
- If a child appears to be at risk, Silver Stars Day Nursery follows the procedures advised by the South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership. (Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy for details of this)
- In these cases, both the parent and Silver Stars Day Nursery are informed and the Proprietor or her appointee works with Ofsted or the South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Records

- A record of complaints against Silver Stars Day Nursery and/or the children and/or the adults working in our setting is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Summary Complaints Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

This policy was adopted by	Silver Stars Day Nursery
Date	January 2025
Review date	January 2026
Name of signatory	Mrs Jenifer Capper
Role of signatory	Proprietor
Signed: Date:	 December 2024

Complaint Form

Please complete and return to Ellie Wallace (Manager), marked 'Private and Confidential' who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:
Childs's name (if relevant):
Your relationship to the Child (if relevant):
Address: **Postcode:** **Day time telephone number:** **Evening telephone number:**
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the Nursery about it.

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.
Signature: **Date:**
Official use
Date acknowledgement sent:
By who:
Complaint referred to:
Date: