



Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd

Complaints Policy

1. Overview

1.1

Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd is committed to providing an open and accountable quality service for all. One way we continue to improve is by listening and responding to all complaints, by rectifying errors and taking whatever steps possible to prevent further occurrences.

1.2

Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd aims to ensure that:

- a) Making a complaint is as easy as possible.
- b) We deal with complaints promptly, politely, fairly, factually and confidentially.
- c) We deal with complaints as an expression of dissatisfaction with our service that requires prompt action or response.
- d) We respond in the correct and proper way, with explanation, apology or information as appropriate.
- e) We review and learn from complaints thereby improving our service.

1.3

We recognise that many concerns need to be raised informally and dealt with quickly. If a parent/carer/volunteer wishes to make a complaint about any occurrences concerning Forest School, they can talk to the Forest School Leader or class teacher initially. However, if concerns cannot be resolved informally, immediately or the matter is serious then the formal complaints policy should be followed.

1.4

Complaints regarding teaching, assessment, recording and quality assurance are initially handled by Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd who are an ITC First approved Centre offering ITC qualifications.

Complaints regarding delivery of Forest School programmes by Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd staff are handled by the Director, Dave Churchward and/or the Administrator, Meryl Gardner.

1.5

After exhausting Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd procedures, if you are dissatisfied with a decision made or procedures followed by Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd you can then complain to either Dave Churchward or Meryl Gardner or if it is regarding a Forest School leader course we have run ITC First, our Awarding Organisation/Body.

2. A complaint or an appeal

2.1

An appeal occurs when a judgement decision has been made. E.g. Candidates may appeal assessment decisions.

2.2

Any individual or organisation that is affected by an assessment decision made by Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd or ITC First is eligible to take advantage of the appeals process.

2.3

The ITC First Appeals Policy can be found on the policies/procedures page of the ITC website.

3. Formal complaints to Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd

3.1

This formal complaint procedure is intended to ensure all complaints are handled fairly and consistently. It can be used by a learner in the case of a Forest School training course or as a parent/carer/visiting teaching staff member of a young person who is attending Forest School sessions delivered by Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd staff.

3.2

A formal complaint should be instigated if informal methods do not resolve the concern. Informal methods should be to talk to the practitioner/trainer in the first instance to prevent any misunderstanding from the start. If the conversation between practitioner/trainer/adult does not resolve then a formal complaint process listed below should be followed.

3.3

Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd will:

- a) Respond to the formal complaint in writing within 5 working days, stating the time period for a considered response [15 working days].
- b) Deal reasonably and sensitively to the complaint.
- c) Take action where appropriate.

3.4

The complainant should:

- a) Complain in writing
- b) Use the word 'complaint' to avoid any misinterpretation of any comment, or other statements or correspondence received.
- c) Raise concerns and explain clearly all details, consequences as a result and the form of redress or the change in operations that are sought.

d) Complain **formally in writing** to Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd within 8 weeks of the occurrence.

3.5

Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd will investigate the subject matter of the complaint and reply in writing within 15 working days.

3.6

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response then they can write directly to Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd for review and if still not satisfied can complain to ITC Awards Manager who will follow ITC published procedures for handling complaints.

3.7

In the case of a complaint towards a member of staff is not resolved then the matter can be raised to an Alternative Dispute Resolution Provider or Ombudsman or via a small claims court.

In the case of a training complaint if not satisfied with ITC First published procedures then a complaint can be escalated to the external regulators, Ofqual after exhausting ITC First complaints procedure.

3.8

Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd will log any complaints received including the response and actions taken. These will be reviewed at the time of the complaints and annually for trends and preventative actions required.

Policy written by: Dave Churchward

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Checked with ITC First to ensure no further updates required (1 June 26).