

# **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE AND MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF**

## **1. Our Commitment**

At West End Wonders, we strive to create a warm, respectful and responsive environment for every child and family. We value feedback and are always seeking ways to improve our workshops and the experience we provide. Any concerns raised by parents, carers or participants will be taken seriously and handled with care, clarity and professionalism.

While we hope issues can usually be resolved quickly through informal discussion, we recognise that a clear, structured process is sometimes necessary. The following procedure outlines how concerns and complaints will be managed.

## **2. Purpose of This Procedure**

Our aim is to resolve all concerns regarding West End Wonders workshops in a fair, timely and transparent manner.

We maintain a confidential **Complaints Summary Log** to record and monitor all formal concerns raised.

## **3. Raising a Concern or Complaint**

### **Stage 1 – Informal Discussion**

- Parents or carers are encouraged to speak directly with the Workshop Leader or Site Coordinator if they have a concern about any aspect of a session.
- Most matters can be resolved quickly at this stage.
- If the issue recurs or the parent/carer feels it has not been successfully resolved, the process moves to Stage 2.

## **Stage 2 – Formal Written Complaint**

- Concerns should be submitted in writing to West End Wonders via the designated contact email.
- Parents who prefer not to write their own statement may request a complaints form, which can be completed jointly with a senior staff member and signed by the parent/carer.
- Written complaints will be securely stored in a designated complaints folder, with any sensitive investigations kept in separate confidential files.
- Once the investigation is complete, a member of the leadership team will contact the complainant to discuss the findings.
- The final points will be recorded in the Complaints Summary Log.

## **Stage 3 – Senior Leadership Review**

- If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may request a meeting with the director.
- They may bring a companion for support. West End Wonders staff may also have a colleague present.
- A written record of the meeting, including decisions and actions, will be agreed upon by everyone present, signed, and shared.
- This document signifies the completion of Stage 3 and will be logged accordingly.

## **Stage 4 – Involvement of an Independent Mediator**

- If no resolution is achieved at Stage 3, an external mediator—acceptable to both parties—may be invited to assist.
- The mediator's role is advisory; they help clarify the issues, review the steps taken and support both sides in finding a way forward.
- The mediator may meet with individuals separately if helpful.
- An agreed written summary of the mediation process will be created and stored confidentially.

## **Stage 5 – Final Meeting**

- A final review meeting involving the complainant, West End Wonders leadership and (if agreed) the mediator will take place to determine the outcome.
- A written record, including final decisions and any actions to be taken, will be produced, signed by all present, and copied to each party.
- This concludes the formal complaints procedure.

#### **4. Managing Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers**

In accordance with **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**, West End Wonders must act swiftly and appropriately if an allegation is made against an adult working with children.

An allegation must be reported if any staff member or volunteer is suspected of:

- Behaving in a way that has harmed or may harm a child;
- Possibly committing a criminal offence against or involving a child;
- Acting in a way that raises concerns about their suitability to work with young people.

#### **Immediate Action**

Report the allegation **immediately** to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**:  
**0208 461 7669** or **0208 313 4325**

Out of hours emergency contact: **0300 303 8671**

#### **Do NOT:**

- Investigate the allegation yourself
- Ask leading questions
- Promise confidentiality
- Discuss the allegation with the person accused, even if suspension is required

#### **Do Ensure:**

- Any injuries are addressed and parents are informed
- Children are safeguarded and separated from potential harm
- You consult the LADO if you are uncertain—**when in doubt, always speak to the LADO**

## 5. Record Keeping

West End Wonders will maintain confidential, accurate records of:

- All complaints relating to workshops, staff, volunteers, or safeguarding concerns
- The date and circumstances of each complaint
- Actions taken and how the issue was managed
- Outcomes of all investigations
- Any statutory notifications required (e.g. informing Ofsted about relevant allegations)

All complaints must be investigated and responded to **within 14 days**.

## 6. Review of Policy

We are committed to evaluating our practices regularly to ensure they remain robust and effective.

**This policy was last reviewed on: 13th February 2026**

Signed

Director of West End Wonders