

Arka Learning Complaints and Whistleblowing Policy

Policy last updated: July 2024

Next update: July 2025

Staff must read this policy as part of their induction with Arka Learning.

Parents of children registered at Arka Learning who wish to make a complaint should be directed towards this policy which will be available on the Arka Learning website.

How to make a complaint - parent

The following procedure should be followed in the event of a parent wishing to make a complaint:

- Raise your concern in person or over the phone with your child's Centre Director or Assistant Centre Manager on duty who will endeavour to resolve it informally.
- If, after careful consideration, you are not satisfied with the response you may raise your complaint with the Centre Director in writing. At this stage your complaint will become formal, be recorded in writing and a copy sent to you alongside any actions taken.
- If you remain dissatisfied with the response you may raise your complaint with Arka Learning Head Office who will investigate the matter and provide a written record of outcomes to you within 28 days.
- Parents may also complain to Ofsted using the following number: 0300 123 1231.

Raising a safeguarding concern – parents and children

Parents and children must be able to raise safeguarding concerns. They must be made aware as part of the registration process who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is for the centre and how to contact them.

Parents should also be given the number of the local authority children's safeguarding partnership so they can raise concerns directly with them. The numbers for the DSL and local authority will be displayed in the centre.

Records of complaints

Records of formal complaints made to the Centre Director and beyond are kept by the centre for at least three years following the date of the complaint and may be required to be provided to Ofsted or the local authority at any stage. This includes:

- The nature of the complaint
- How the complaint was dealt with initially

- If the complaint relates to an Ofsted requirement (voluntary register only), how it relates to that requirement
- Any action taken following an investigation
- Copies of reports made to parents and any statutory authority

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is a type of complaint which is protected under UK law.

Whistleblowing must be in the public interest and have the potential to affect others. If a whistleblowing complaint is made to Arka Learning the following process will apply:

- The complaint will be raised to Head Office by the Centre Director.
- Arka Learning Head Office will listen to the concern and decide if any action is needed. The person raising the concern may be asked for further information.
- The person raising the concern must say straight away if they do not want anyone else to know it was them who raised the concern.
- They will not have a say in how their concern is dealt with.
- Arka Learning will keep the person who raised the concern informed about the action they've taken, but they cannot give them much detail if they have to keep the confidence of other people.

Complaints which count as whistleblowing and are therefore protected by the law are those which involve:

- a criminal offence, for example fraud
- someone's health and safety being put in danger
- risk or actual damage to the environment
- a miscarriage of justice
- the company breaking the law
- someone covering up wrongdoing

The statutory body for whistleblowing complaints relating to Arka Learning is Ofsted, who can be contacted on their whistleblowing helpline, 0800 123 3155.

If a member of staff is unhappy with how child protection concerns are addressed within Arka Learning they can ring the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on 0800 028 0285.