

COMPLAINTS & FEEDBACK POLICY**1 POLICY STATEMENT**

- 1.1 Children's Links and its subsidiaries (the Group) are committed to delivering excellent services to our customers. The Group is a learning organisation that is committed to achieving ongoing improvement. Feedback from service users and other stakeholders is important to that process. Feedback is actively sought whether it is in the form of comments of approval, recommendation or criticism.
- 1.2 The Group is committed to safeguarding all children in line with safeguarding policies. All matters reported that refer to improper behaviour towards children or pose a threat to children and young people will be addressed through the Safeguarding system.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 All Group employees, volunteers and members of the public who use our services or visit our premises should demonstrate behaviour that adheres to the principles set out within this policy.
- 2.2 This policy and the associated procedures use 'complaints' and 'feedback' interchangeably. Not all feedback is a complaint, and all feedback can be used to improve our services.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The Group is committed to dealing with all complaints and comments in a way that provides valuable feedback to the organisation. This will:
- Affirm what is important to the customer
 - Identify the necessity for and nature of customer focused improvements
 - Supplement market information
 - Support future planning of service development
- 3.2 The Group aims to:
- Handle complaints in an efficient manner in order to improve the confidence levels of the complainant in the organisation
 - Deal with complaints quickly and fairly
 - Treat all complaints as valuable opportunities to learn from mistakes and improve what we are doing

Date Originated	2000	Date Reviewed	Nov 2024
Reference	SMT	Date of Approval	Nov 2024

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4 PRINCIPLES

The following principles underpin The Group's customer complaints management process and will be reflected in complaints management procedures at all levels.

4.1 Organisational Improvements

Complaints information is reported to Trustees at every meeting and wherever possible used to improve and develop services.

4.2 Fairness

The complaint management process is unbiased, objective and impartial to all parties. All complaints will be treated as legitimate and will be properly assessed.

4.3 Privacy and Confidentiality

The privacy of all complainants and any staff member named in a complaint is respected, information will only be disclosed on a 'need to know basis'. No reference to complaints will be placed in any individual's file unless disciplinary action is taken.

4.4 Timelines

Customer complaints will be acknowledged and managed, in line with the Customer complaints procedure, without unnecessary delay.

- Formal complaint recognised within 5 working days
- Investigation and response within 28 working days
- Appeal acknowledged within 5 working days and dealt with in 10 working days
- Final appeal acknowledged within 5 working days and dealt with in 20 working days

4.5 Assistance

Customers will be given assistance to provide feedback wherever necessary and will be supported through the feedback management process. Assistance will also be made available to staff who are the subject of a complaint or are involved in the assessment/ investigation of a complaint.

4.6 Anonymous Complaints

Complaints received anonymously will be recorded and considered. Action may be limited if further information is required to ensure a full and fair investigation.

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5 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- 5.1 External complaints will be dealt with through the Complaints Procedure. These include complaints from:
- Children and carers
 - Community members
 - Other organisations
 - Elected members and other public representatives
 - Parents and Carers
 - Any users of our services
- 5.2 Customer feedback will be encouraged assessed and used to influence organisational growth as a result of the feedback management process.
- 5.3 All staff and volunteers in the Group will be made aware of the policy through their operational managers and be supported in its implementation.
- 5.4 The policy is available to all service users.

6 ASSOCIATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FORMS

- Safeguarding Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Fundraising Policy
- Fundraising Procedure
- Complaints procedure
- Complaints form with procedure
- Blank complaints form
- Model letter

7 REVIEW

- 7.1 This policy will be reviewed on a three year cycle and when any feedback or legislative changes warrant it.

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