



RAISING YOUTH

RAISING THE BAR FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN MEDWAY

Complaints Policy and Procedure

2023/26

Policy Information

Policy Name	Complaints Policy and Procedure
Policy Owner	Director of Operations
Policy Author	Director of Operations
Approved By	Board of Trustees
Approval Date	
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Review Cycle	3 Yearly
Next Review	

Version Control

	Summary of Changes	Date Changed
V1	First Published	

Introduction

Raising Youth CIO strives to provide the highest quality service to all of its partners and service users. However, we recognise that things can sometimes go wrong. The charity promotes a culture of learning lessons from adverse incidents and encourages all of its colleagues to report when something has gone wrong.

Anyone can make a complaint, whether you are a member of the public, parent/carer, young person or a charity partner. We take all complaints seriously and have robust processes in place to resolve any complaint fairly and quickly. This policy describes our complaints process and how we will respond to complaints.

Complaints Process

Stage 1: Informal Stage

We hope to resolve complaints informally wherever possible using informal meetings and discussions. We encourage individuals to raise a complaint with a member of staff directly who will resolve any issues using open dialogue and mutual understanding.

Concerns at the informal stage should be raised with a Senior Practitioner; who will be leading on a project or service. Individuals can ask the member of staff they are already dealing with or email enquiries@raisingyouth.org.uk to be put in touch with the relevant Senior Practitioner. Where a complaint relates to the Senior Practitioner, individual may contact Director of Operations who can help.

The Senior Practitioner will take details of the complaint and will carry out enquiries to establish what happened. This should happen within 10 working days of the complaint being made. When carrying out enquiries, colleagues should ask the following questions:

- What when wrong/What happened?
- Why does this fall short of our standards?
- Why did this happen?
- What can we do to make it right? What can we do to prevent recurrence?

These questions underpin our commitment to learning lessons to improve the quality of our service. Enquiries need to be evidence based and represent a balance of views. When carrying out enquiries, Senior Practitioners may:

- Speak to colleagues to collect their version and interpretation of events,
- Review written, video and audio records.

Once the Senior Practitioner has completed their enquiries, they will provide a written response to the individual who made the complaint. Their written response must outline:

- What their enquiries found,
- What action has been taken, if any,
- Details on how to appeal the outcome of the complaint.

If the complainant remains unsatisfied, they can escalate to stage 2.

Stage 2: Formal Complaints

Formal Complaints must be made to the Chief Executive Officer by emailing enquiries@raisingyouth.org.uk. The CEO will record the date the complaint was received and will confirm it's receipt within 3 working days. Within their response, the CEO will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, check what remains unresolved and what the complaint would like to happen. The CEO may consider a face to face or virtual meeting if they deem appropriate.

The CEO may delegate investigation of complaints to the Director of Operations; however the CEO must make the final outcome decision on the basis of the investigation. During any investigation, the investigator will:

- If necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish,
- Keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the CEO will provide a written response within 20 working days of the complaint being made. The CEO may contact the complaint and advise them that this process will take longer than 20 working days; in doing so they must provide an updated conclusion date.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions we will take to resolve the complaint. Their response must include information on how to appeal the decision.

If the complaint relates to the CEO, these will be managed by the Board of Trustees under stage 3.

A written record of a complaint at this stage will be kept along with any actions have been taken regardless of the decision.

Stage 3: Appeals and Escalation

Where stages 2 and 3 have been exhausted by the complaint remains unresolved; individual can escalate the complaint to the Board of Trustees. In doing so, the complainant must email enquiries@raisingyouth.org.uk outlining:

- What they feel was wrong,
- What action has already been taken,
- Why they remain dissatisfied,
- What they would like to see happen.

A trustee will provide written acknowledgement of complaint made within 7 working days. The trustees will request information and records from Stages 1 and 2 from Senior Leaders. The Board will then meet to consider the appeal; this should happen within 30 working days. The board will consider the following:

- The original complaint: Trustees will review the investigations from Stages 1 and 2 and if needed gather additional evidence to make a judgement.
- Previous Actions: Trustees will consider whether the responses from colleagues at Stage 1 and 2 were appropriate and in accordance with this policy.

The board will make decisions as above and advise the complaint in writing within 10 working days of the meeting. Their response will outline:

- Their final decision on the matter,
- What actions have been taken, if any,
- Decision on the actions of Stage 1 and 2
- Information about further escalation.

The trustees have the final decision on complaints raised with the charity. Their decision cannot be appealed further. In some cases, it may be appropriate for individuals to raise their concerns with an external agency; we have information below:

- Complaints relating to Safeguarding: Medway's Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Complaints relating to Charity Compliance: The Charity Commission for England and Wales
- Complaints relating to Data Protection: The Information Commissioner's Office

Appendix 1: Complaints Form

Your Name:
Child's Name (If relevant):
Your relationship to the child (If relevant):
Address:
Contact Number:
Email Address:
Please outline the details of your complaint, including if you have already spoken with a colleague about it:
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?
Are you attaching any supporting documents? If so, please give details.
Signature:
Date:

Appendix 2: Contacting an External Regulator

Safeguarding Complaints

Medway's Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 01634 331 065

<https://www.medwayscp.org.uk/mscb/info/4/advice-resources-professionals/2/concerned-childcare-professional>

Data Protection Complaints

The Information Commissioner's Officer (ICO): 0303 123 1113

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

Charity Compliance Complaints

The Charity Commission for England and Wales

<https://forms.charitycommission.gov.uk/Raising-Concerns/>