

HOMES2INSPIRE

POLICY No.: P7-2

VERSION No.: 2017/1

COMPLAINTS & SUGGESTIONS

1. Policy

It is the policy of the Home that young people's wishes and feelings will be respected and taken into account in all aspects of their care.

It is important that children and young people living at the Home know how to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of their care, feel comfortable with the process, and know that they will receive a proper response to any complaint.

Complaints and suggestions are encouraged and welcomed as a way of ensuring that any dissatisfaction with the quality of service provided by the Home is brought to the attention of the Registered Manager/On-Call Duty Manager as quickly as possible. All complaints will be taken seriously, will be fully investigated, handled quickly, sympathetically and confidentially, and, where necessary, improvements made.

Our aim is to deal with complaints efficiently and fairly, and, wherever possible, to achieve a resolution which is satisfactory to both the complainant and the Home. This Policy document will be provided to any resident, or their representative, upon request.

2. Cross – Reference

P5-1 - Consultation and Partnership Working

P7-1 - Supporting Young People

P12-4 - Notification of Significant Events

P12-5 - Safeguarding – Allegations Against Staff

3. Legislation

[Children Homes Regulations 2015 \(including the Quality Standards\)](#)

Regulation 39 and
Standard 7 Children's Wishes and Feelings

[The Children's Act 2004](#)

4. Verbal Complaints

Verbal complaints will be dealt with as quickly and efficiently as possible. All staff working at the Home are potentially recipients of verbal complaints. Upon receipt of a verbal complaint the member of staff will:

- Attempt to deal with the matter, informally, (such as negotiation, arbitration or mediation) to the overall satisfaction of the complainant. Verbal complaints / negative comments made that do not need investigating are to be recorded in the young person's 'moans and groans' book
- Prepare a comprehensive written record of the complaint using the form designed for this purpose
- Submit the form to the Registered Manager/On-Call Duty Manager who will maintain an accurate record of verbal complaints, and, where necessary, will seek assurance from the complainant that the matter has been dealt with satisfactorily. If the complainant is not satisfied at this point then the matter will be dealt with as if it was a written complaint.

Should the member of staff not be able to deal with the complaint immediately, or within a few days (for example, the matter refers to operational policy, or is a matter outside of the staff member's normal responsibility, or the matter is clearly serious in its nature), then the staff member will inform the complainant that the matter will have to be referred. In such situations the complainant will be advised that their complaint will be acknowledged, formally, in writing, within three working days. At this point the matter will be dealt with as if it were a written complaint.

To try to avoid complaints there will be regular opportunities for young people to express their wishes in formal and informal ways. This might be through the forum of a weekly house meeting, regular key work sessions or simply through asking to speak to a member of staff about

an issue that is causing concern. All young people will be encouraged to express their views even about minor issues with the aim of resolving concerns before they give rise to a complaint.

As per policy P5-1 (Consultation and Partnership Working), the principle of listening to young people and taking their views into account when planning and undertaking their care is paramount. Young people will be given the opportunity to participate in and shape the overall ethos, nature and routine of the home they live in and the opinions and views of young people and their parents/carers, Social Workers, IRO and any other significant professional will be sought and ascertained on a regular and frequent basis.

5. Written Complaints

- All written complaints (together with unresolved verbal complaints) should be addressed (or forwarded) to the Registered Manager / Deputy Manager.
- A blank complaints form can be found in the Young Person's guide and in the allocated location next to the complaints post box, or can be obtained by asking a member of staff. The completed form should then be posted in the 'Complaints/Suggestions' box.
- Any complaint regarding the Registered Manager should be addressed to:

Registered Responsible Person (Children's Homes)

Homes2Inspire
Lumonics House
Valley Drive
Swift Valley
Rugby
CV12 1TQ

6. Governing principles for dealing with complaints

All written complaints will be recorded in a Register maintained for this purpose.

All written complaints will be acknowledged within three working days of receipt.

All written complaints will be investigated, and a written response given within 10 working days. The written response will address the issues raised in the complaint, and provide information about what

action (if any) has been taken, or is to be taken, by way of resolution.

All records relating to the complaint, including copies of all correspondence etc. will be filed in the complaints file maintained by the home deputy manager.

No person who is the subject of a formal complaint may take any responsibility for consideration of a response to that complaint.

No person will suffer any form of harassment or reprisal for making a complaint.

Any complaint, which concerns child protection issues, will be referred immediately to the Registered Manager / Deputy Manager / On call Duty Manager who will initiate Child Protection Procedures.

Any complaint that is deemed as serious and involves a staff member working at the home shall be referred to LADO for guidance and reported to Ofsted as a Notification of Significant Events (see P12-4 and P12-5)

Where it is considered at the outset that the '10 working day response' target is unlikely to be met, then a more realistic assessment will be made and the complainant informed.

If a target date is missed then the complainant will be informed of the reason(s) why, given a new target date, and kept regularly informed of progress made. It is hoped that all complaints may be dealt with satisfactorily within the governing principles described above. However, if the complainant or his/her representative is not satisfied then he/she will be advised to refer the complaint, together with an explanation of why dissatisfaction remains, in writing to:

**Registered Responsible Person (Children's Homes)
Homes2Inspire**

The timescales for response are as before:

- A further letter of acknowledgement will be sent within three working days, and
- A review of the complaint/ action taken will be considered and further information sought if appropriate

- A further written response will be provided within 10 working days on completion of this process

If the “10 working day target” is likely to be missed, the complainant will be kept informed. It is hoped that following further review and response, the complainant is satisfied with the way the matter has been handled, and the response which has been given and the matter comes to a close. However if the complainant remains dissatisfied, then they should be referred to the placing authority.

7. Advocacy Services

There may on occasion be a need for a complainant to use the services of an advocate in presenting/preparing his/her case. In exceptional circumstances, for example, the complaint is regarding the Registered Manager; the complainant may seek the support and assistance of his/her Social Worker.

Young people are provided with their Local Authority Advocacy Service and the Independent Review Officer (IRO) contact details upon admission or at the earliest opportunity of it being provided by the social worker.

The Home will also have a copy of the placing authority complaints procedure.

The young person will be provided with the address for Ofsted, should they not be happy with the outcome or wish to take the complaint to them:

**Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2 WD**

8. Legal Intervention

This complaints procedure is designed to ensure, as far as possible, that complaints regarding the services provided by the Home are dealt with internally, and, hopefully, to the satisfaction of the resident and/or their representative. However, if it is immediately apparent that the matter is to be referred, by the complainant, to a Solicitor, then the relative informality of the review process is immediately compromised.

If such a situation arises, either at the outset, or during the complaints procedure, then the complainant will be informed that the complaints procedure is no longer in operation, and that the matter is to be immediately referred to Solicitors and/or Insurers who represent the interests of the Home.

9. External Complaints

Where complaints are received from external sources they will be referred immediately to the Registered / Deputy / On call Duty Manager who will contact the complainant and confirm the nature/seriousness of the complaint. The Registered Manager or his/her nominated person will undertake the necessary investigation. The home Statement of Purpose also covers the process for how external stakeholders can complain should they wish to do so; the Homes2inspire website provides a 24/7 phone line for any queries to be raised www.homes2inspire.co.uk

Our home appreciates that there may be occasions when individuals wish to raise concerns externally to the home management or direct organisation; it is accepted that individuals have the right to raise their concerns with our registration and governing body, who is Ofsted.

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2 WD

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

10. Suggestions/ Grumbles

The Home recognises that complaints are often difficult to make, and that “bureaucratic” processes are unlikely to be welcomed by young people. The Home, therefore, encourages suggestions on any matter connected with an individual’s care plan, their treatment within the Home, the operation of the Home, meal arrangements, etc., as a means of dealing with any dissatisfaction.

The Home also has a dedicated ‘Moans and Groans Book’ that the young people are encouraged to complete with any low level ‘grumbles or suggestions’ that they wish to raise. These are responded to by the Home and retained within the log for the Home/Deputy Manager to quality assurance and ensure that each entry has been responded to appropriately.

Originator:	Homes2Inspire
Approved by:	John Parker Director of Children's Services Homes2Inspire
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