

Complaints Handling Policy



Last Updated April 2024

Next Update April 2025

Policy Statement

Young Minders The Home Education Hub is committed to delivering high-quality services and maintaining transparent communication with all stakeholders, including beneficiaries, donors, staff, volunteers, and the public. We value feedback and take all complaints seriously, addressing them promptly, fairly, and respectfully.

This policy outlines our approach to handling complaints, ensuring that any issues raised are resolved effectively while maintaining trust and accountability.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Provide a clear framework for addressing complaints.
 2. Ensure complainants are treated with dignity and respect.
 3. Foster continuous improvement by using feedback to enhance our operations.
 4. Maintain compliance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements.
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Scope

This policy applies to all individuals interacting with Young Minders The Home Education Hub, including:

- Beneficiaries and service users.
 - Donors and sponsors.
 - Staff, volunteers, and trustees.
 - Members of the public.
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Definitions

- **Complaint:** An expression of dissatisfaction about the charity's services, actions, or lack of action, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

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- **Complainant:** The person or organisation making the complaint.
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Policy Principles

1. Complaints are handled in a timely, fair, and transparent manner.
 2. All complaints are treated confidentially and with respect.
 3. Complainants will not face retaliation for raising concerns.
 4. Feedback from complaints is used to improve services and operations.
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Procedures

1. Submitting a Complaint

- Complaints can be submitted in the following ways:
 - **Email:** contact@youngminders.org
 - **Phone:** 07488237619
- Complainants should provide:
 - Their name and contact information.
 - Details of the complaint, including dates and individuals involved.
 - Desired outcome or resolution.

2. Acknowledging Complaints

- All complaints will be acknowledged within **5 working days** of receipt.
- The acknowledgment will include:
 - Confirmation that the complaint has been received.
 - An outline of the next steps and timelines for resolution.

3. Investigating Complaints

- A designated officer will lead the investigation, ensuring impartiality and confidentiality.
- The investigation will involve:
 - Reviewing relevant records and documents.
 - Speaking with involved parties.
 - Gathering and analysing evidence.
- The investigation will be completed within **15 working days** (where feasible).

4. Responding to Complaints

- The outcome of the investigation will be communicated in writing, including:

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- A summary of findings.
 - Actions taken to address the issue.
 - Any corrective measures or improvements planned.
 - If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they can appeal the decision.
- 5. Appeals Process**
- Appeals must be submitted within **10 working days** of receiving the initial response.
 - A senior manager or trustee will review the appeal.
 - The decision on the appeal will be communicated within **20 working days**.
- 6. Escalating Complaints**
- If the complaint cannot be resolved internally, it may be escalated to an external body, such as:
 - Charity Commission (or equivalent regulatory body).
 - Independent mediators or ombudsman services.

Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled with strict confidentiality. Information will only be shared with individuals directly involved in the investigation or resolution process.

Record Keeping

- A complaints log will be maintained, recording:
 - The date of the complaint.
 - Details of the complaint and complainant (where applicable).
 - Actions taken and resolution achieved.
- Records will be retained for **5 years** and reviewed periodically to identify trends and improvements.

Training and Awareness

1. Staff and volunteers will receive training on how to handle complaints effectively and compassionately.
2. The complaints policy will be made available on the charity's website and shared during staff and volunteer inductions.

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Monitoring and Review

- Complaints will be reviewed quarterly by the senior management team to identify patterns and opportunities for improvement.
- This policy will be reviewed annually by the board of trustees to ensure it remains effective and relevant.