



# Yorkshire Children’s Centre Complaints Policy

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### Part 1: Complaints Policy Statement

Yorkshire Children’s Centre are committed to providing a high-quality service to everyone we deal with. We pride ourselves on being open and honest with everyone that uses our services, building and facilities and understand that from time to time there may be dissatisfaction in the service provided, which may lead to wanting to raise a complaint. We welcome feedback and complaints from our service users and customers, we will listen to your complaints, treat them seriously, and learn from them so that we can continuously improve our service. We will deal with all worries and concerns in a positive, supportive, and timely manner.

Throughout our complaints procedure you can expect to be treated with courtesy, respect, and fairness at all times. We expect that you will also treat our staff dealing with your complaint with the same courtesy, respect, and fairness.

#### Who can make a complaint?

Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to Yorkshire Children’s Centre about any provision of facilities or services that we provide.

#### The difference between a concern and a complaint

A *concern* may be defined as ‘an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought.’

A *complaint* may be defined as ‘an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action.’

#### How to raise a concern or make a complaint

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone at stage 1 of the complaint’s procedure. Complaints that escalate to stage 2 and beyond need to be submitted in writing, as outlined in our Complaints Procedure. These can be received by email or by hard copy posted to us.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete our complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats or assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint. You can also ask third party organisations like the Citizens Advice to help you.



## Timescales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

## Scope of our Complaints Policy and Procedure

Our Complaints Policy and Procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services provided by Yorkshire Children’s Centre, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Who to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Matters likely to require a Safeguarding Investigation</li> </ul>	Complaints about safeguarding matters are handled under our Child Safeguarding Policy or Adult Safeguarding Policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whistleblowing</li> </ul>	We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff grievances</li> </ul>	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the charity’s internal grievance procedures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff conduct</li> </ul>	Complaints about staff will be dealt with under Yorkshire Children’s Centre internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use Yorkshire Children’s Centre premises or facilities</li> </ul>	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them directly.

## Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, Yorkshire Children’s Centre wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- an explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur



- an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- an undertaking to review policies in light of the complaint
- an apology



**Signatures for Part 1: Complaints Policy Statement**

**Signed by YCC Chair**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature (electronic is accepted)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed by Chair of Governors**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature (electronic is accepted)** \_\_\_\_\_



## Part 2A Complaints Procedure for our non-college services

### Stage 1 Approach (informal)

In most cases the member of Yorkshire Children's Centre staff supporting you directly would be your first point of contact, either over the telephone or in person. They will discuss your concern with you to ensure they have a full understanding of the circumstances and gain an understanding of how you think that the concern can be rectified. Staff will try to deal with all concerns quickly and effectively and seek to address and resolve the concern within five working days to everyone's satisfaction.

If for whatever reason stage 1 of our complaint's procedure has not resolved your concern to full satisfaction the concern will be raised to stage 2 making your complaint formal.

### Stage 2 – Initial contact (formal)

We would hope that many concerns can be dealt with informally when you first make them known (stage 1 above). However, we are aware that this will not always be the case and you may feel you need to raise a formal complaint.

A formal complaint will be addressed by a member of our Management Team that is responsible for the service delivered upon the receipt of a written formal complaint. The member of the Management Team that is dealing with your complaint will formally acknowledge receipt of your complaint and invite you to discuss your complaint in more detail within five working days of receiving it. Discussion of the complaint will usually take place over the telephone unless a face to face meeting is requested.

Once the manager has a full understanding of the concerns or issues you have experienced, they will then investigate the issues you have raised. This may include interviews with staff, other service users or professionals to enable the manager to resolve your complaint.

The manager will then formally respond to your complaint in writing, which will include their findings and any action Yorkshire Children's Centre may need to take in light of their findings from the complaint raised. This process will be completed within ten working days from the date discussions regarding your complaint were held with the Manager.

### Stage 3 – Formal Consideration of complaint

In the unlikely event that stage 2 has not resolved your complaint, you will need to inform us in writing what issues have not been resolved or what outcomes from stage 2 you are unhappy with. We ask that you inform us within ten working days of receiving management findings if you wish to escalate your complaint further.

Stage 3 of the complaint's procedure will be addressed by the member of the Senior Leadership Team with overall responsibility for the service used.



Please address your written complaint to the designated Senior Leadership Team member. Details will be provided by the Manager responsible for Stage 2.

The Senior Leadership Team Member will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within five working days. As part of the consideration of your complaint, you will be invited to a meeting to discuss the complaint and to discuss any further details. If you wish, you can ask someone to accompany you, to help you explain the reasons for your complaint. These meetings can be arranged to take place virtually using Microsoft Teams or similar software.

The member of the Senior Leadership Team will carry out a full investigation of all matters relating to your complaint including reviewing Stage 2 investigation findings. Once the Senior Leadership Team Member has established all the relevant facts, they will send you a written response to your complaint within ten working days from the date of the meeting held.

#### **Stage 4 – Review of Complaint**

If you still feel that your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction the complaint will be progressed to stage 4 upon receiving notice in writing within ten working days of receipt of report from stage 3.

This stage will be a formal review of stages 1-3 which will be conducted by another member of the Senior Leadership Team. The review will evaluate the manner in which the complaint has been handled and whether the response is fair and reasonable.

If the outcome is that it is found to be fair and reasonable you will be informed of this within ten working days in writing.

If a review finds that issues still need to be addressed, these will be addressed by both members of the Senior Leadership Team to find a fair and reasonable outcome. You will be informed of the outcome of this review within ten working days.

#### **Stage 5 - Consideration by the Board of Trustees**

If your concern has already been through Stage 1 - 4 and you are not happy with the outcome, the next step is to make a request for a member of the Board of Trustees to review your complaint.

You should contact the Chair of Trustees by letter, which can be emailed to them, enclosing a copy of the written complaint originally submitted, indicating which matters remain unsolved. No new complaint may be included.

The Chair of Trustees will consider if the complaint needs to be addressed by a complaint review panel. You will be informed in writing within ten working day if your complaint will be considered by a panel. If it is deemed that a panel is required it will consist of the Chair of trustees, a member of the Board of Trustees and the Yorkshire Children's Centre Chief Executive.



Letters outlining your concern should be sent to:

Chair of Trustees  
Yorkshire Children's Centre  
Brian Jackson House  
New North Parade Huddersfield,  
HD1 5JP

Email letters can be sent to [chair@yccuk.org.uk](mailto:chair@yccuk.org.uk)

Following a complaint review panel taking place you will be informed of the outcome within five working days. The Chair of Trustees will direct what the final outcome of any complaint will be.

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint YCC can provide details of our accrediting bodies, should you wish to raise this further.

\*If the subject of your complaint is Yorkshire's Children's Centre Chief Executive Officer complainants will be required to direct their complaint directly to the Chair of Trustees

### **Serial and unreasonable complaints:**

There may be occasions when, despite all stages of the procedures having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If the complainant tries to reopen the same issue, the Chair of Trustees is able to inform them in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and the matter is now closed.

YCC is committed to dealing with complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with the charity. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive, or threatening. YCC defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainants contact with the charity, such as, if the complainant:

- Refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers for assistance.
- Seeks to circumvent the published complaints process and procedures.
- Refuses to co-operate with the complaint's investigation process
- Refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaint's procedure
- Insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaint's procedure or with good practice.
- Introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be considered and comment on.





- Raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales.
- Makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues and seeks to have them replaced.
- Changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds.
- Repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
- Refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented
- Seeks an unrealistic outcome
- Makes excessive demands on the charity's time by frequent, lengthy, and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.
- Uses threats to intimidate
- Uses abusive, offensive, or discriminatory language or violence
- Knowingly provides falsified information
- Published unacceptable information on social media or other public forums

Complainants should try to limit their communication with YCC that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being processed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email, or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible the Chief Executive or Chair of Trustees will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour continues, the Chief Executive will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact YCC causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will be reviewed after six months.



**Complaint Flowchart (non-college)**

**Stage 1 Approach (informal complaint)**

Informal discussion regarding your concerns with the member of staff supporting you  
Outcome within five working days complaint resolved or escalated to stage 2.



**Stage 2 Initial Contact (formal complaint)**

Formal complaint in writing to management, acknowledgement, and discussion within 5 working days. Investigation and outcome provided in writing within ten working days. Complaint resolved or escalated to stage 3.



**Stage 3 Formal Consideration of complaint**

Formal meeting with member of the Senior Leadership team to discuss concerns and outcome of stage 2, acknowledgement within five working days, investigation and review of complaint, written outcome within ten working days of meeting. Complaint resolved or escalated to stage 4.



**Stage 4 Review of complaint**

Review of stages 1-3 conducted by an alternative member of the Senior Leadership Team to consider if stages 1-3 are fair and reasonable. Outcome to be provided in writing within ten working days. Complaint resolved or escalated to stage 5.



**Stage 5 Consideration by the Board of Trustees**

Chair of Trustees to consider if a complaints review panel is required. Decision to be provided in writing within ten working days. Panel to be held with Chair, a Trustee and CEO. Outcome to be provided within ten working days of the panel hearing. Complaint closed.



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Signatures for Part 2A: Complaints Procedures for our non-college services

Signed by CEO

Name: Mark Farmer

Date: 24.02.2022

Signature (electronic is accepted) MARK FARMER



## Part 2B Complaint Procedure for Brian Jackson College

### Stage 1 Approach (informal)

On occasions, a parent may raise a concern directly with school staff without any formality. This can be done either in person, by telephone or in writing. At this stage we may need to clarify whether you are making a complaint, seeking information, or have misunderstood a situation. At this stage, a parent/carer will be given a copy of this policy and procedures.

You can bring a friend to any discussion.

The member of staff dealing with the concern should make sure that you are clear as to what action (if any) of monitoring of the situation has been agreed.

Where no satisfactory solution has been found, you should be informed that you can consider making a formal complaint in writing to the Head Teacher which will take matters to stage 2 on the complaint's procedure.

### Stage 2 Complaint heard by Head Teacher

If your concern is not resolved immediately and you confirm that you wish to make a complaint, the opportunity to discuss the matter with the Head Teacher will be given. Complaints can be made either verbally or in writing and will be accepted by email.

The Head Teacher will acknowledge your complaint in writing within five working days. In some cases, the Head Teacher will have already been involved in looking at the matter; in others it will be his/her first involvement.

The Head Teacher will consider providing an opportunity to meet with you to supplement any information previously provided. If the complaint is against a member of staff the Head Teacher will talk to the staff member against whom the complaint has been made.

If necessary, the Head Teacher will interview witnesses and take statements from those involved. The Head Teacher will keep reasonable written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation.

Once all the relevant facts have been established, the Head Teacher will produce a written response to you. The Head Teacher may wish to meet with you to discuss/resolve the matter before confirming the outcome in writing. The written response will include a full explanation of the decision and the reasons for it. Where appropriate, it will include what action the school will take to resolve the complaint.

You will be advised that if you are not satisfied with the response and wish to take the matter further, you can do so, by writing to the Chair of the Governing body within 21 days of receiving the outcome letter.



Stage 2 should be completed in ten schools' days. However, it is recognised that this timetable is likely to prove impossible for complaints which are complex. In such case, the Head Teacher will write to you giving a revised target.

Brian Jackson College will not pay financial compensation as a response to complaints, though may spend money on a relevant educational purpose (e.g., paying a fee for a repeat examination).

### **Complaints about the Head Teacher**

If the complaint is wholly or mainly about the Head Teacher a Governor will be appointed to consider the complaint in accordance with stage 2 of the procedure described above. However, before stage 2 is instigated the appointed Governor will invite the Head Teacher to respond to the complaint in writing within ten school days. The appointed Governor will send a copy of the Head Teachers response to the complainant, and they will be asked to indicate within five schools' days of receipt of the response whether they are satisfied with the response. If they are not satisfied with the response stage 3 will commence as described below.

### **Stage 3 Complaint heard by the Chair of Governors**

If the complaint is not resolved at stage 2 then written complaint should be submitted to the Chair of Governors within 21 days. This can be by email or hard copy sent by post. The Head Teacher will provide the contact details.

### **Stage 4 Complaint heard by Governing body and Trustees**

If your concern has already been through Stage 1 – 3 and you are not happy with the outcome, the next step is to make a request for a member of the Board of Trustees to review your complaint. You should contact the Chair of Trustees by letter, which can be emailed to them, enclosing a copy of the written complaint originally submitted, indicating which matters remain unsolved. No new complaint may be included.

The Chair of Trustees will consider if the complaint needs to be addressed by a complaint review panel of 3 people. You will be informed in writing within ten working day if your complaint will be considered by a panel. If it is deemed that a panel is required it will consist of a member of the Board of Trustees, a College Governor, and the Yorkshire Children's Centre Chief Executive. the panel will make finding recommendations that will be provided to the complainant and where relevant the person complained about and will be available for inspection on the school premises. It will detail actions taken by the school as a result of the complaint. All correspondance will remain confidential except where requested by ofsted and/or the secretary of state.

Letters outlining your concern should be sent to:

Chair of Trustees  
Yorkshire Children's Centre Brian Jackson House  
New North Park, Huddersfield,  
HD1 5JP



### **Serial and unreasonable complaints:**

There may be occasions when, despite all stages of the procedures having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If the complainant tries to reopen the same issue, the Chair of Governors is able to inform them in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and the matter is now closed.

Brian Jackson College is committed to dealing with complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive, or threatening. Brian Jackson College defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainants contact with the school, such as, if the complainant:

- Refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers for assistance.
- Seeks to circumvent the published complaints process and procedures.
- Refuses to co-operate with the complaint's investigation process
- Refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaint's procedure
- Insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaint's procedure or with good practice.
- Introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be considered and comment on.
- Raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales.
- Makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues and seeks to have them replaced.
- Changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds.
- Repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
- Refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education.
- Seeks an unrealistic outcome
- Makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy, and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.
- Uses threats to intimidate
- Uses abusive, offensive, or discriminatory language or violence
- Knowingly provides falsified information
- Published unacceptable information on social media or other public forums



Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being processed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email, or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour continues, the Head Teacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact Brian Jackson College causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will be reviewed after six months.



**Stage 1 Approach (informal complaint)**

Parent/carer will be provided with a copy of this policy and procedures. Informal discussion regarding concerns. Outcome within five working days complaint resolved or escalated to stage 2.



**Stage 2 (Complaint heard by Head Teacher)**

Formal complaint in writing or verbally to the Head Teacher, who will acknowledge the complaint, and discussion within 5 working days. Investigation and outcome provided in writing within ten working days. Complaint resolved or escalated to stage 3. If the complaint is about the Head Teacher, an appointed Governor will consider the complaint in accordance with the policy stages.



**Stage 3 Complaint Heard by the Chair of Governors**

If the complaint is not resolved at stage 2 then written complaint should be submitted to the Chair of Governors within 21 days. This can be by email or hard copy sent by post. The Head Teacher will provide the contact details.



**Stage 4 Complaint reviewed by Trustees**

Review of stages 1-3 conducted by an active member of the Board of Trustees to review the complaint. No new complaint may be included. The Chair of Trustees will consider if the complaint needs to be addressed by a complaint review panel. If it is deemed that a panel is required it will consist of a member of the Board of Trustees, a College Governor, and the Yorkshire Children's Centre Chief Executive. Complaint closed.





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**Further Recourse**

Where complainants can provide written grounds that the Governing body may have acted unreasonably or failed to follow this procedure, they may request that the CEO and Chair of Trustees for the Yorkshire Children's Centre would intervene.

This would only happen in very rare cases where the reviewing officer believed that the Governing body may have acted procedurally incorrectly or arrived at an outcome which appeared, in all the circumstances, to be unreasonable.

**Signatures for Part 2B: Complaint Procedure for Brian Jackson College**

Signed by Chair of Governors

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (electronic is accepted) \_\_\_\_\_