

Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure

Introduction

Rainbow Hub is committed to providing high quality services to all our beneficiaries, their families and our supporters.

This policy outlines how we deal with feedback (including compliments and complaints) about our services and activities.

We value your compliments so that we can continuously improve what we do, and where we think we have done particularly well, we would be delighted to hear from you.

If you have a concern or you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the charity's services or activities we also want to hear from you, so that we can respond to your concern and learn from it.

For the purposes of this policy 'beneficiary' includes all children, young people and adults accessing services at Rainbow Hub.

The policy applies to all services provided by Rainbow Hub including all therapy services, nursery and school provision.

Policy Principles

We welcome feedback so that if something has gone well, we can repeat it. If something has gone wrong, we would like to know so that we can prevent it happening again.

The principles of this policy are that we want to ensure that:

- Commenting is as easy as possible
- We always respond and treat any comments seriously

Complimenting our service.

Compliments are valuable, welcome and important, and when they are received, either verbally or in writing, will be recorded and acknowledged. Compliments enable Rainbow Hub to:

- Understand that our services are being provided to our beneficiaries/families/supporters' satisfaction.
- Provide positive feedback to our trustees, staff and volunteers
- Influence and support our organisation and services

Complaining about our services.

Rainbow Hub recognises that there will be times when our trustees, staff and volunteers may make mistakes, or get things wrong. In order to learn from such mistakes, we need to know about them. Such comments, compliments or complaints will always be taken seriously, recorded and responded to appropriately. (see Appendix 1).

Rainbow Hub is not required to investigate the following:-

- a complaint by an employee relating to their employment (this will be handled through the grievance policy and procedure).
- a complaint that was made in person or by telephone and is resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, no later than the next working day after the day the complaint was made.
- a complaint that has already been investigated and resolved.

Formal and informal complaints

An informal complaint is defined as one received verbally, and should be made to the person who dealt with the matter you are concerned about, as they are most likely to be able to respond quickly and to put things right. You may also speak to their line manager. We will make a record of your concern and agree with you the best way and time to get back to you.

A formal complaint is defined primarily as one received in writing and is usually only made as a last resort, when you feel that an informal complaint has not addressed your needs. Those who wish to make a formal complaint should set out the details in writing to the Chief Executive. Please note – in putting your complaint in writing, it will help us if you can include as much detail as possible. For example, include dates, times, names of people involved, together with anything you consider to be relevant. A formal complaint should be signed and dated by the person making the complaint.

Principles of Rainbow Hub complaints procedure

- Rainbow Hub recognises that comments about its services are an important part of customer feedback and will be used to inform our on-going business improvements.
- Complaints will be investigated fully and fairly.
- Complaints will be dealt with in confidence. The only exception to this is when others could be put at risk by matters referred to in the complaint.
- If you are not happy with the result of the response to the complaint, you have the right to appeal.
- The CEO, Headteacher or Nursery Manager will contact Ofsted where the complaint relates to the school or nursery provision. The Headteacher or Nursery Manager (as appropriate) will also ensure that the complainant is provided with Ofsted contact details.

Rainbow Hub is committed to ensuring that its services are of the highest quality. The Complaints Procedure enables Rainbow Hub to respond clearly and properly to complaints and to know when and why people are not satisfied with its services, so that continuous improvements can be made. To this end Rainbow Hub will:

- allocate someone to investigate each complaint - the investigator should be of suitable seniority to resolve the issues raised in the complaint.
- have arrangements in place to communicate with complainants by both letter and email.
- ensure the information about how to make a complaint is readily available by having the complaints procedure:

on the Rainbow Hub website (www.rainbowhub.org) or available on request.

Complainants should be informed that they will receive (as far as is reasonably practical) assistance to enable them to understand the complaints procedure, and advice on where they may obtain such assistance.

Vexatious or malicious complaints

Most complaints provide Rainbow Hub with an opportunity to improve its practice and to learn from people's experience. However, the organisation has a responsibility to protect its staff from people who behave in a way which is abusive or malicious and to avoid inappropriate use of its resources through dealing with persistent or vexatious complaints. Rainbow Hub will not investigate complaints that it considers to be vexatious or malicious. Nor will it investigate anonymous complaints.

Examples of behaviour which might be regarded as vexatious include:

- Abusive or threatening behaviour – whether in person or in writing
- Persistent telephone calls, emails or letters on the same issue
- Persistent verbal complaints which cannot be resolved

Who can make a complaint?

This procedure is for members of the public who have received a service from Rainbow Hub. This policy is not for staff or volunteers employed by the organisation, who are referred to the internal Grievance Procedure or the Whistle blowing Policy.

Accountability

The Chief Executive of the organisation is responsible for the efficient operation of this complaints procedure. Responsibility for carrying out investigations of complaints may be delegated to an appropriate Senior Team Member, under the authority of the Chief Executive.

Recording complaints

The Chief Executive will be responsible for ensuring a record of all compliments and complaints is maintained. These will be reviewed by the Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis and will inform our on-going quality improvement work. Rainbow Hub will maintain a complaints log to record the following information:

- details of each complaint received, including relevant dates
- the subject matter of the complaint
- details of the investigation and outcome
- details of the reasons for delay where an investigation took longer than the agreed response period agreed, and
- the date the report of the outcome of the investigation was sent to the complainant.

Specific details which may identify individuals (including complainants or staff) will be kept strictly confidential.

Annual Complaints Report

Rainbow Hub will prepare an annual complaints report for each year in which they will:

- specify the number of complaints received
- specify the number of complaints that the organisation decided were well-founded, partly or fully
- specify the number of complaints that the organisation has been informed have been referred to other bodies
- give the subject matter of complaints received
- summarise any matters of importance in those complaints themselves or in the way that the complaints were handled, and
- summarise any matters where action has been or is to be taken to improve services as a consequence of those complaints.

Rainbow Hub will ensure that their annual complaint report is available to anyone on request and presented to

the Board of Trustees annually.

Appendix 1 - Complaints Procedure

Section A - Complaints about Rainbow Hub:

You can complain about any aspect of the organisations work. Examples might include a concern about the quality of a particular service, decisions that have been made or information that has been provided. If your complaint is about Rainbow Hub then there are three stages that you can go through to try and resolve the problem. You may wish to involve an advocate, friend or someone else to support you at any stage. However, they should not be someone directly involved in the matter being investigated.

If the complaint is of a serious nature it could be inappropriate for the complaint to be handled in an informal way, therefore it is at the discretion of the CEO or Board of Trustees to decide how the complaint is treated.

If you need a sign language or community language interpreter, please let the person dealing with the complaint know and every reasonable effort will be made to provide it.

The three stages are:

Stage one (Informal) Speak to the individual(s) concerned or their line manager and try to resolve the complaint informally. The individual concerned is required to tell you their name and who their line manager is if you ask them.

Stage two (Formally registering a complaint) If you are not satisfied with the response you have received at stage one (informal) you should then use stage two of this procedure.

Outline the details of your complaint by letter or email and send it to:

*Chief Executive, Rainbow Hub, Salt Pit Lane, Mawdesley, Lancashire, L40 2QX
Telephone number: 01704 823276 - Email l.fahey@rainbowhub.org*

If your complaint is about the Chief Executive then you need to address the Chair of the Board of Trustees (at the same address as above, marked private and confidential) The Board of Trustees are ultimately responsible as trustees of the organisation.

Your complaint will be acknowledged by letter within seven working days from the date it is received. The letter will confirm that the matter raised will be investigated by Rainbow Hub and who is investigating the complaint.

You will receive a full response to your complaint within 21 working days from the start of the investigation in writing from the person appointed to investigate the complaint. The response will include the following information:

- A decision about whether the complaint was upheld or not
- The reason for the decision
- The redress, if appropriate, which will be offered to you e.g., an apology, additional help or directing to other sources of advice or support
- Any other action that may be taken in light of the complaint

If it is not possible to provide a full answer to your complaint within 21 working days, the letter will outline reasons why and give a date by which a full answer is expected from Rainbow Hub.

Stage three (Appeal) If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint then outline the reasons for your dissatisfaction by letter or email within seven working days of receiving it to the Chief Executive (or the Chair of the Board of Trustees if it is about the Chief Executive).

An Appeals Panel normally of two members, including a trustee, will be convened to consider your appeal. The Chief Executive or Chair of the Board of Trustees will be responsible for ensuring the panel is appropriately representative. Panel membership will be restricted to people who have had no previous involvement in the complaint.

Members of the Appeals Panel will:

- read through the necessary papers
- speak to relevant individuals involved with the complaint
- make a final decision.

The chair of the Appeals Panel will write to you within 28 working days of receiving your appeal, to confirm:

- the final decision about the complaint
- the reason for the decision
- any action that may be taken in light of the complaint.

Time limits

In circumstances where time limits cannot be met due to unforeseen circumstances, complainants will be notified in writing. The reasons for the delay with adjusted timescales will be supplied by the person responsible for handling the complaint.

Author	Lyndsay Fahey
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Changes Made	Inclusion of beneficiary definition Inclusion of school/nursery Addition of Headteacher
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