



## Policy/Guidance

Office use only	
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Division:	Residential
Authorised:	Mike Fletcher
Designation:	Chief Executive Officer

### References

- The CEO is also the Responsible Individual
- Where child is written this relates to children and young people

## TITLE: COMPLAINTS

### 1 Purpose

This document describes the processes that should be followed in the event that you wish to make a complaint.

### 2 Scope

Anyone internally or externally wishing to make a complaint.

### 3 References

- Children Homes Regulations (England) 2015- Regulation 39
- Complaints Handling Rules 2015

### 4 Definitions

## 5 Action

5.1 Why do we have a complaints policy? We welcome feedback on any aspect of our work, including complaints, comments, compliments and suggestions. This policy covers complaints only.

5.2 Whilst we always aim to get things right first time, we know that on occasion we may not. If we make a mistake, we will be open and honest about it as soon as possible. We will tell you about our mistake, explain why we think the mistake was made, and tell you how we will do our best to ensure it doesn't happen again.

5.3 Care Afloat is positive about receiving complaints, and views them as an opportunity for us to get things right. We are committed to learning and continuous improvement. We use information about mistakes and complaint information constructively to reflect, learn, monitor and improve our performance.

### 5.3 Who can complain using this policy?

Complaints can be made by various individuals:

- Children and young people.
- Parents and carers
- Social workers.
- Placing authority.
- Employees of Care Afloat.
- Members of the public.

This policy will be provided on request to other agencies, professionals, relatives and friends, who wish to make a complaint on behalf of a child.

### How can you complain?

A complaint can be received either verbally or in writing or by accessing our website [www.careafloat.co.uk](http://www.careafloat.co.uk) and completing the online complaints form.

### Who should investigate a complaint?

- Who should be the investigator will often depend on the seriousness and/or complexity of the matter: In most cases, where the matter to be investigated appears to be clear and the facts are not in dispute, the role of investigator may be carried out by an appropriate line manager.
- If the complaint to be investigated is more serious or complex (such as potential gross misconduct, safeguarding, discrimination or bullying) then, the responsible individual or their delegate will investigate the complaint.

### 5.4 Informal Process

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If a child (or their family) is unhappy with the service provided; with individual care provided or with the attitude or behaviour of staff; or for any other reason; the person receiving the information will take the following action:

Check with the person that they feel comfortable speaking to them; or would they prefer someone else? Provide information regarding the availability of someone else

who is contactable.

We will ensure that no person who is the subject of a complaint takes any part in its consideration other than, if the Home's Manager considers it appropriate, at the informal resolution stage only.

- If the problem is brought up by an adult, record the information in the complaint log, read it back to the person to ensure they have accurately recorded what the person wishes to say. Record the name and contact details.
- The member of staff receiving the information should try to resolve the problem immediately, if possible, e.g., lost property. The member of staff should ensure they record the action taken, and check and record that the person is satisfied with the outcome.
- If the problem is brought up by a young person, staff must ensure that it is appropriately recorded, along with any action taken and the satisfaction of the young person with the outcome.

## 5.5 STAGE 1- FORMAL PROCESS

Once the Home's Manager (or appropriate manager if the complaints is against the Home's Manager) received a formal complaint they will:

- Contact the complainant to record the details of the complaint and **acknowledge the complaint** in writing **within 2 working days**.
- Notify the Responsible Individual that they have received a complaint.
- Look into the complaint, seeking to resolve problems asking for procedural guidance from the Responsible Individual as necessary.
- Send a draft of the response letter to the Responsible Individual- and amend draft as necessary based on advice.
- Provide a **final written response** to the complainant **within 10 working days** setting out the findings of the previous problem-solving process.
- Ensure the complaint is fully documented and correspondence filed.

5.6 If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the Stage 1 complaint, they should put in writing why they are unhappy within 14 days of receiving written notification of the Stage 1 outcome.

## 5.7 STAGE 2 – FORMAL PROCESS

- The complaint will be investigated by a manager not previously involved in the complaint. They will **respond in writing within 25 days**, outlining their findings and recommendation.
- Where it is not possible to complete the investigation within 25 working days, Stage 2 may be extended to a maximum of 65 working days. All extensions should be agreed by the Responsible Individual. The complainant should be informed of the reasons for the delay and a date for completion in writing.

## 5.8 OPTIONS AFTER APPEAL

Ofsted regulates Children's Homes. They make sure that Children's Homes are accountable, well-run and meet their legal obligations. You can make a complaint to Ofsted about services they inspect and/or regulate but advise that you follow the

internal complaints procedure first. You can find the complaints procedure at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted/about/complaints-procedure>

## 5.9 CONFIDENTIALITY, GDPR AND DATA PROTECTION

- We will only tell those people involved in resolving your complaint about it. Sometimes we may need to share your complaint or concerns with other individuals to understand the situation fully.
- If you are a child or young person making a complaint, we will talk with you about any concerns we have for your wellbeing that might make it necessary to tell any other adults.
- After the complaint is resolved, we will keep a summary on record, using relevant data protection protocols. If you use our services and have a file, the complaint record will be placed on your file.

## 6 Documentation

- Complaints form
- Children and Young person's guide
- If you wish to make a complaint leaflet (for members of the public or other agencies)