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COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. Purpose

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
- To make sure everyone at Action for Kids Charitable Trust (AFK) knows what to do if a complaint is received.
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

2. Scope

All complaints or expressions of dissatisfaction with AFK other than from employees who are covered separately (see Employee Handbook).

3. Policy Statement

AFK views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person, or organisation that has made the complaint.

Complaints received from donors in connection with AFK fundraising activities will be addressed according to the Fundraising Regulator guidelines.

4. Definition of complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of AFK. The charity makes a distinction between a complaint and negative feedback. The former is an expression of criticism, and the latter is an expression of opinion intended to inform and improve.

5. Where complaints come from

Complaints may come from service users, service users' families, schools, colleges, donors, applicants for mobility equipment, and any person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in AFK. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should use AFK policies and procedures for Discipline and Grievance, Whistle Blowing (Confidentiality Reporting) or Dignity at Work.

6. Procedure

6.1 Complaints from Service Users

- AFK recognises that complaints from young people may be given informally and in a variety of methods.
- All complaints will be taken seriously and passed to Service Delivery managers and the Executive Director of Services.

- 'How to complain' will be discussed with young people as part of induction. There will also be regular opportunities for young people to share their views on AFK and the programmes they attend.
- This policy will be available on the website and in hard copy in a folder at reception to ensure accessibility.
- Staff may receive complaints via teachers or support workers or directly from young people themselves.
- All complaints relating to Service Delivery must be passed to the Director of Services who will carry out an investigation. If the Director is absent or the complaint is about the Director, then the complaint must be passed to the CEO
- The staff member receiving the complaint should explain this process and service users and other stakeholders should be offered an option of complaining directly to one of the senior managers.
- A record of the complaint will be kept with the Director of Services and records of complaint shared periodically with SMT.
- Having investigated the complaint, a senior or relevant manager will meet with the service user to agree how it is to be resolved.
- Other intermediaries (e.g. teachers, support workers) will be informed of the outcome.
- Complaints from service users will be dealt with within 7 days.
- Details of the outcome should be recorded and shared periodically with the Senior Management Team.

6.2 Complaints related to fundraising

See Appendix 1

6.3 Other Complaints

- Whoever receives the complaint should record contact details and brief outline of complaint and inform the complainant that the appropriate manager will contact them within 48 hours.
- Details to be passed to appropriate manager who should contact complainant as soon as possible and within 48 hours.
- Details should also be sent to the Finance Director who maintains a central record.
- The Manager should assess the severity or urgency, and pass details to the appropriate Director where necessary.
- The Director or Manager will investigate the complaint and contact the complainant with an appropriate response.
- The complainant should be involved in agreeing that issues have been resolved.
- Where a complainant is not satisfied, alternatives, including a face-to-face meeting, should be offered.
- Details of the resolution should be recorded and passed to the Finance Director.

7. Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

8. Recording and Monitoring

AFK will maintain a centralised record of all complaints received across the separate logs and also details of the resolution. The complaints register will be monitored quarterly by SMT to ensure procedures are working effectively and to identify any issues that may be indicated by the type of complaint received.

Appendix 1

Complaints Procedure to be used by Fundraising Team

Complaints will come in through three main channels: email, telephone and by post. You may receive a complaint via a member of staff who isn't in the Fundraising Team. You should tell them that you will follow up with the complainant and then follow the process below.

When notified of a complaint, record any relevant details including name, address, and a contact number. Apologise if there has been an error on AFK's behalf. Reassure the complainant that we do our best to investigate every complaint and thank them for bringing this to our attention. With the help of people letting us know where we have got it wrong, we can get it right in future. If the caller would like a written response, we can send them one.

Enter details of the complaint into the spreadsheet - [Fundraising Complaints.xlsx \(sharepoint.com\)](#) (Access only for members of the Fundraising team).

Please make a note of any necessary suppressions on Donorfy, the Fundraising database.

If the complainant requested a response, please save a copy of the response on the database. This will help us to track our communications with our donors.

If any call relates to GDPR, either a violation or a request to be forgotten, please inform the Finance Director.

Fundraising complaints will be monitored quarterly at SMT along with other non-fundraising complaints.