



Complaints Policy

| Version & Notes | Submitted to F&HR | Outcome | Submitted to TB | Outcome | Review Date |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Version I 6.10.2006 | | | | | |
| Version II 4.2.2014 | 21.2.14 | Approved | 12.3.14 | Approved | April 2015 |
| Version III 10.8.2015 | 21.8.15 | Approved | 9.9.15 | Approved | 2017 |
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Complaints Policy

1.0 **General Statement**

1.1 Children in Wales views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future as part of its commitment to quality assurance improvements, as well as a chance to put things right for the person [or organisation] that has made the complaint.

1.2 Children in Wales is committed:

1.2.1 To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint

1.2.2 To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint

1.2.3 To make sure everyone at Children in Wales knows what to do if a complaint is received

1.2.4 To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way

1.2.5 To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired

1.2.6 To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

2.0 **Principles**

2.1 Children in Wales pursues strategies to make sure that users including learners, members and any other external individual or body, is aware of how to make a formal complaint. A person's personal situation, background or means of communication should not be a barrier to making a complaint.

3.0 **Scope of Policy**

3.1 This Policy relates to:

- Staff, trustees and volunteers of Children in Wales
- Assessors/Tutors/Trainers/Internal Verifiers/Quality Assurance Managers of awarding bodies, including Associates of Children in Wales involved in delivering accredited and other training
- Learners, Members of Children in Wales and any other external individual or body wishing to make a complaint about the organisation or its activities

3.2 This policy also applies to enquiries and/or appeals relating to all accredited training qualifications and units offered by Children in Wales.

3.3 This policy does not cover complaints from Children in Wales staff who should use the organisation's Grievance procedures.

4.0 **Related Policies**

4.1 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Children in Wales Accredited Training Policy Series
- Children in Wales Equality Policy
- Children in Wales Discipline and Grievance policy

5.0 **Guidance**

5.1 **Definition of Complaint**

5.1.1 For the purposes of this policy, a formal complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, made in writing, about the standard of service, action or lack of action by Children in Wales, affecting an individual or group.

5.1.2 A complaint is not just an observation or a concern. A complaint is a considered grievance requiring a formal response.

5.1.3 The complaints procedure may be used in a number of circumstances, including the following:

5.1.3.1 inappropriate behaviour by a Children in Wales member of staff;

5.1.3.2 a shortcoming or breach in service standards;

5.1.3.3 in relation to training provision:

- a decision concerning an assessment
- a sanction imposed as a result of quality assurance;
- the outcomes of a quality review or external verification;
- errors made in the generation of certificates.

This is not an exclusive list.

5.1.4 The complaints procedure may not be used for anything:

- involving another organisation;

5.1.5 Complaints under item 5.1.3.3 above relating to training provision will not be upheld if they happened more than 30 working days before the matter is raised

5.2 The guidance in the appendices sets out:

- The principles which should be followed when making decisions about complaints in relation to work or services supplied or carried out by Children in Wales and in relation to accredited and other training provision.
- The procedures which should be followed when making a complaint.

6.0 **Appendices**

6.1 Appendix 1 - Guidance, Principles & Procedures to be followed in relation to Complaints about work or services supplied or carried out by Children in Wales.

6.2 Appendix 2 – Guidance, Principles & Procedures to be followed in relation to complaints about accredited training provision

Appendix 1

Guidance, Principles & Procedures to be followed in relation to Complaints about work or services supplied or carried out by Children in Wales.

1. Discussing a complaint

- 1.1 Most complaints are resolved quickly and informally, through discussions.
- 1.2 If informal discussions do not resolve the matter, a formal complaint may be submitted in writing.

2. Submitting a written complaint

- 2.1 Written complaints may be sent to the Chief Executive, Children in Wales, 25 Windsor Place, Cardiff, CF10 3BZ or by email (via Administration Manager) at caroline.taylor@childreninwales.org.uk.
- 2.2 Verbal complaints may be made by phone to 029 2034 2434 or in person to any of Children in Wales' staff, volunteers or trustees at 25 Windsor Place, Cardiff, CF10 3BZ or at any of our events or activities.

3. Receiving Complaints

- 3.1 Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have.
- 3.2 Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded.
- 3.3 The person who receives a telephone or in person complaint should:
 - Write down the facts of the complaint
 - Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
 - Note down the relationship of the complainant to Children in Wales (for example: client, member)
 - Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure
 - Explain to the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
 - Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

4. Resolving Complaints

- 4.1 In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if appropriate.
- 4.2 If the complaint is about a member of Children in Wales staff or trustee, representative or associate the details should be forwarded to the Chief Executive.
- 4.3 If the complaint is about the Chief Executive the details should be forwarded to the Chair of the Trustee Board.

- 4.4 Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the Administration Manager within one week.
- 4.5 On receiving the complaint, the Administration Manager records it in the complaints log. If it has not already been resolved, they delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.
- 4.6 If the complaint related to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.
- 4.7 Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within a week. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of the complaints procedure should be attached.
- 4.8 Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.
- 4.9 The complaints log will be received by the Corporate Management Team as applicable.
- 4.10 If a complainant is not satisfied with the action to resolve the complaint, they can refer further to the Trustee Board.

Appendix 2

Guidance, Principles & Procedures to be followed in relation to Complaints about accredited training provision

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Children in Wales is committed to providing clear, accessible information on its complaints procedures for all users of its services and to implement the complaints procedure in a transparent way.

2. Discussing a complaint

- 2.1 Most complaints are resolved quickly and informally, through discussions. Children in Wales keeps a record of these initial discussions at its regular training meetings.
- 2.3 If informal discussions do not resolve the matter, a formal complaint may be submitted in writing.

3. Submitting a Written Complaint

- 4.1 Formal complaints are addressed to Chief Executive, Children in Wales, 25 Windsor Place, Cardiff, CF10 3BZ or by email (via Administration Manager) to caroline.taylor@childreninwales.org.uk.

5. Investigating a Written Complaint

- 5.1 Children in Wales acknowledges the complaint within five working days of receipt.
- 5.2 Children in Wales appoints an investigating officer who examines the evidence presented and seeks further evidence, as appropriate, to ensure the sufficiency of evidence to support a judgement. The investigating officer produces a written investigative report, providing an evidence-based judgement on all points raised and outlining any implications of the outcome. The conclusions identify, if appropriate, actions for Children in Wales
- 5.3 The investigation is conducted in line with regulatory requirements.
- 5.4 If the investigating officer has not been able to gather sufficient evidence, Children in Wales informs the complainant of the need for an extension and the time limit will be readjusted and agreed in writing by all parties.

6. The outcome of the Complaint

- 6.1 The outcome of the investigation is conveyed in writing to the complainant within 30 working days of the date of acknowledgement of the receipt of the complaint and signals the right of appeal and the date by which Children in Wales needs to receive the appeal.
- 6.2 There is no charge for Children in Wales's investigations except in the case of a complaint found to be vexatious (i.e. motivated by intent to cause trouble).

7. Appealing against a complaints decision

- 7.1 An appeal may be made if the complainant remains dissatisfied and the procedure is outlined in the enquiries and appeals policy.
- 7.2 Children in Wales must receive the appeal in writing within 10 working days of the date of the investigative report.
- 7.3 Children in Wales does not consider any appeal received after 10 working days of the date of the investigative report.
- 7.4 Children in Wales undertakes to investigate the formal complaint with integrity and to come to a fair conclusion

8. Following a Complaint

- 8.1 In all cases, Children in Wales provides a written explanation of its conclusion.
- 8.2 Children in Wales monitors the frequency and nature of formal complaints and implements quality improvements as appropriate.
- 8.3 Where the formal complaint leads to a discovery of a failure in a system or procedure which might affect others, Children in Wales takes reasonable steps to notify all relevant parties, including learners and other awarding organisations, and to mitigate the impact of the failure.
- 8.4 Any corrective action taken by Children in Wales considers how to prevent the failure recurring.

9. Monitoring the Complaints Policy

- 9.1 The record of formal complaints is maintained by the Administration Manager and overseen by the Chief Executive.
- 9.2 The record is reported to the Trustee Board at each meeting, where applicable.