

Hill House School Policy

Complaints Procedure

Hill House School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all students fulfil their potential.

Availability

This Complaints Procedure will be made available to all staff and brought to the attention of carers/parents/guardians, placing authorities and, where appropriate, potential individuals at the pre-admission stage. A copy can be requested by contacting the school office.

On admission, individuals and their parents/guardians/carers will be given, a copy of the Complaints Procedure in an accessible way.

If an individual has specific or global learning difficulties/disabilities that make it impracticable for him/her to make a complaint, another person such as an advocate or member of their education, therapy or care team will be nominated to look after the individual's interests in this regard. These arrangements will be made known to the parents/guardians/carers or people acting on the behalf of the individual concerned and to the funders/placing authority.

Responsibility

Head of Service

The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff receive relevant training
- Responsibility and Final sign off of all complaints up to Step 11 of the Complaints Procedure – Internal Stage.
- Monitoring and review of procedures
- Maintaining the Central Complaints log and associated file.
- Submitting information regarding complaints to Cambian KPI

Complaints Co-ordinator

Our Complaints co-ordinator is the Principal, Kate Landells

The Complaints Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- ensuring that the Complaints Procedure is well publicised and that copies of the relevant materials are available at all times and all associated documents (which are listed at the end of this procedure) are used accordingly.
- Receiving complaint forms from staff
- Supporting the Head of Service to monitor and manage the complaint process up to Step 8 of the Complaints Procedure (Internal Stage)

Staff

All staff have day-to-day responsibility to understand and follow the Complaints Procedure and to act promptly and in accordance with the procedures if an Individual or other person indicates that they wish to make a complaint.

Procedure

Cambian consider a complaint to be a written or oral/verbal expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to the exercise of its functions in relation to its current or past individuals.

It is our expectation that most problems, concerns, comments, criticisms etc. about our service, can best be dealt with by staff informally at an early stage. Through meetings, the key worker system, regular review meetings and the involvement, where appropriate, of parents/carers and location and appropriate local authority staff, such matters can be aired and dealt with speedily and, in the majority of cases, resolved.

An Overview of our Complaints Procedure

The detailed complaints procedure is set out in the Complaints Flow Chart. This includes expected time frames and responsibilities for dealing with all elements of managing a complaint and any necessary actions to take.

For complaints regarding the use of the Mental Health Act 1983 please see the separate Procedure for this.

Ideally a complaint should be made using Complaint Form but this is not essential. There are a variety of complaint forms which can be used for this purpose:

- Complaint form – (22.03) used by parents/carers/members of public etc
- Complaints forms for Individuals – (22.09a – g) which set out 3 options for making a complaint:
 - Speak to a person they trust at the home
 - By telephone to either Head office/Operations director or the service's regulatory authority
 - Complete the form and post it in a pre-addressed and pre-paid envelope to Head Office.

The Complaints Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that pre-addressed and stamped envelopes are available with the complaint forms for Individuals. Depending on the service type, the addressed envelopes will be sent to either:

- Education Services
- Residential Services (West)
- Residential Services (East)

At the following address:

CareTech Community Services
Metropolitan House
3 Darkes Lane
Potters Bar
Hertfordshire
EN6 1AG

On receipt of a complaint the member of staff must record it on the relevant Complaint Tracking Form (22.03a for Individuals and 22.03b is for all other complaints). Staff are to follow the instructions on the form for further action.

NOTE: For complaints forms received at Head Office, the procedure for following up complaints will be carried out by the relevant Operational Director.

Initially the member of staff receiving the complaint will decide if it is something that can be resolved quickly and informally. Staff should only do this if they feel confident to do so. If necessary, the staff member will seek advice from their line manager.

Identified key staff are to offer to meet with the complainant to respond to their complaint. Where this is not felt to be appropriate or if it cannot be resolved quickly and informally the complaint will be passed to the Complaints Co-ordinator who will follow the complaints procedure until the complaint is concluded using the Complaints Procedure as set out in the Complaints Flowchart.

If the complaint cannot be resolved internally (Steps 1 – 8 of complaints flowchart) the Operations Director will appoint an external investigator as part of the Complaints Procedure (Steps 9-11 of complaints flowchart.)

The next stage of the complaint procedure is the Appeal Process (Steps 12-15). The Operations Director will appoint an appeal panel consisting of three persons, none of whom have had any involvement or are connected in any way to any of the parties involved in the complaint and none of whom are members of staff or management of the location. At least one member of the Appeal Panel will be independent of Cambian Group. The Complainant will be invited to attend the hearing if they wish and be given the opportunity to be accompanied by a person of their choice. The decision of the Appeal Panel is final.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal process at any stage they may choose to take the matter up with our Regulatory Authority (Step 16) as below. Their contact details will be made available to Individuals and external stakeholders as required as follows:

Ofsted,
Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street,
Manchester
M1 2WD

Immediate Notifications to the Head of Service

The Principal will be made aware immediately of any complaints regarding the following:

- Injury to an Individual.
- Violence or ill treatment.
- Theft or defrauding an individual.
- Serious neglect of an individual including neglect of their treatment.
- Indecent or offensive behaviour by a member of staff.
- Breaches of an individual's confidentiality.
- All types of discrimination.
- Any safeguarding issues

In these circumstances they will identify who will investigate the complaint, if the complaint relates to a safeguarding issue; this will be managed in accordance with the Child Protection - Safeguarding policy

All complaints are to be discussed and documented in the relevant management meetings. The discussion is to include any actions required to address any complaints raised. This also provides a forum for learning from the complaint and putting in place any recommendations from the investigation.

Compliments, suggestions and feedback

Any compliments, suggestions or feedback received by staff should be recorded separately on a Compliments Log to be held by the Principal and be managed under the Consultation, Communication and Feedback Policy and Procedures.

Audit

The Principal will use a Complaint Tracking Form as an audit trail for any investigation carried out.

Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal.

Principal of Hill House;
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