

YLF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Purpose and Principles

The Young Lives Foundation is committed to doing the best it can for children and young people in need and their families. To that end, the charity welcomes and encourages feedback from those using its services, from other stakeholders and also from members of the public, as this enables us to know what we are doing well and where we might need to make improvements.

Many matters of concern can be dealt with as problems to be solved or issues capable of informal resolution and can therefore be handled by the worker(s) most closely involved.

If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally or if the matter is of a serious nature, it can be dealt with as a formal complaint using the following procedure. If the complaint is made by a young person or vulnerable adult, YLF will offer an independent advocate to support them with their complaint and an interpreter if applicable.

2. Complaints Procedure

2.1 Stage 1 – Formal Complaint

A formal complaint should be to the Senior Manager of the relevant department who will make arrangements for the complaint to be investigated.

Senior Managers are:

- Neil Vickery – Mentoring, Befriending, Legends
- Kristy Tidey – Advocacy, Participation, Appropriate and Accompanying Adult Services

Formal complaints will be acknowledged upon receipt of the complaint and the complainant will be advised of the process and anticipated timescale for investigating the complaint.

A formal complaint will normally be made in writing, either electronically or hard copy. However, a service-user may make their complaint orally if they wish and be supported by an advocate or other representative of their choice.

Once the investigation has been completed, the complainant will be informed of the outcome and of his/her right to seek a review if dissatisfied with that outcome.

In the event that the Senior Manager is the subject of the complaint, the matter will be referred to the charity's CEO, Stephen Gray, who will determine the investigation process. He will advise the complainant of the process and the anticipated timescale for investigating the complaint. Once the investigation has been completed, the complainant will be advised of the outcome and of the right to seek a review if dissatisfied with that outcome.

2.2 Stage 2 – Review

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation at Stage 1, s/he has the right to ask for a review. This will be normally be carried out by the CEO, Stephen Gray,

who will acknowledge receipt of the request for a review and will advise the complainant of the manner in which the review will take place and the likely timescale. Following the review, the CEO will advise the complainant of the outcome and that this is the final internal stage in the complaints procedure.

If the CEO is unable to carry out the review, a Trustee of the charity will lead the review.

3. Referral to Local Authority

If the complainant remains dissatisfied and the complaint relates to a service delivered under contract on behalf of a local authority, s/he will be advised that the matter can be referred to the relevant local authority department to be dealt with through its representations and complaints procedure.

4. Timescale

The internal procedures will not normally exceed 20 working days at each stage. Any extension of that period should be agreed between all the parties.

5. Accessibility

The charity will make arrangements for this procedure to be available in accessible formats and for the processes to be conducted in ways that are sensitive to age, culture, needs and understanding.

6. Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information

The charity must ensure that they do not disclose confidential information to anyone who does not have the right to receive it. Where information is disclosed this should be in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998. Equally the charity should not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law. If there is doubt about whether or not to share information, advice must be sought from an appropriate senior member of staff i.e. the CEO.

7. Accountability and Responsibility

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the accountability and implementation of this policy.

8. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Trustees with and complaints will be reported to the Board annually in the form of a 'Register of Formal Complaints'.

9. Communications

This policy will be communicated to trustees, staff and volunteers to implement into their practices and is available via a leaflet available on request.

This policy is readily available to external stakeholders electronically or by hard copy on request.

Reviewed | October 2021