



Complaints Policy & Procedures

Aims and Objectives:

The complaints policy aims to:

- Encourage the resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible.
- Ensure that concerns are dealt with quickly, fully and fairly and within the clearly defined time limits. (See procedures)
- Provide effective responses and appropriate redress.
- Maintain good working relationships between all people involved in Whoopsadaisy.

Recording and Monitoring of Complaints:

At all formal stages of the complaints' procedure, the following information should be recorded in the Complaints Manual (See attached Complaint Form):

- Name of the complainant
- Date and time the complaint was made.
- Details of the complaint
- Desired outcome of the complaint
- How the complaint is investigated (including written records of any interviews held)
- Results and conclusions of investigations
- Actions taken
- The complainant's response (i.e. satisfied with outcome/further pursuit of complaint)
- Details of the Appeal Panel; the conclusions, results and any actions to be taken.

Informal complaints should be noted, and the notes should include as much of the above mentioned detail as required. Copies of any notes will be made available to all involved in the complaint.

Whoopsadaisy is committed to monitoring all complaints received (informal and formal) to ensure that possible on-going problems are dealt with swiftly and efficiently; suggestions for improvements in our work is always welcome.

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality is vital. All conversations and correspondence will be treated with discretion. Complainants and all those concerned have the right to know what use will be made of personal information and, accordingly, personal information will only be shared on a 'need-to-know' basis. Always inform all those concerned if their personal information is to be shared with third parties.

Complaints Procedure:

Stage 1: Informal Discussions

Complaints can result from dissatisfaction with the services provided, the conduct of an individual member of staff or the failure of the staff members and/or trustees to follow agreed policies and procedures.

Most concerns or complaints can be dealt with informally. There are many occasions when concerns can be resolved straight away without the need to submit a formal complaint. Indeed, many concerns raised at this level might not officially be classified as complaints.

Complainants should be encouraged initially to voice their concern to a member of the Senior Management Team – usually the Executive Manager or the Chair of Trustees, if the complaint concerns the Executive Manager, in the hope that the matter can be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties on an informal basis. If the Executive Manager is not available the concern, complain should be raised with the Chair or another Trustee.

All concerns/complaints should be acknowledged within 24 hours and the resolution communicated within 3 working days. If a longer period is necessary to complete investigations the complainant should be informed, within the 3 days of the reasons and of the new date for resolution.

Stage 2: Written Complaints (See attached flow chart)

If a complainant has approached Whoopsadaisy to raise a concern or to make an informal complaint but is not satisfied with the outcome of the ensuing discussions, they should be encouraged to submit their complaint in writing to the Trustees. Complainants can, of course, choose to make a formal complaint in writing from the outset. (i.e. Go immediately to Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure). The Chair of Trustees will then investigate the complaint and attempt to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the complainant providing the complaint is deemed justified.

When a formal complaint has been registered:

- It should be acknowledged within 24 hours.
- The complainant should receive a full reply within 10 working days. If a longer period is needed, then the complainant should be kept advised accordingly.
- The Complainant should be notified of their right of appeal when given their full reply.
- If the complaint should involve the Chair of Trustees, then the complainant will be advised to write formally to the Executive Manager who will be supported by another trustee from the Board of Trustees.

Stage 3: Appeal Process (See attached flow chart)

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the response to their complaint, they can take advantage of their right to appeal:

- The Appeal Panel will be nominated by the Chair of Trustees and should consist of 2/3 members. The Panel must consist of nominated members of the Trustee Board together with an independent panel member who is not involved in the direct management of Whoopsadaisy. Details of who will be sitting on the Appeal Panel must be forwarded to the complainant in advance.
- The complainant should be given the opportunity to bring along a friend or representative to the hearing. (Details of which should be forwarded to the Trustees at least 10 working days before the date of the Appeal Hearing).

- Appeals should take place within one calendar month of the request being issued.
- Copies of the findings and recommendations arising out of the appeal hearing should be sent to all parties involved within 10 working days.
- Details of all complaints and how they are resolved should be entered into the complaint manual.
- All correspondence, statements and records relating to a specific complaint should be kept confidential.

Remit of the Complaints Appeal Panel:

Anyone sitting on the Appeal Panel should consider the following points:

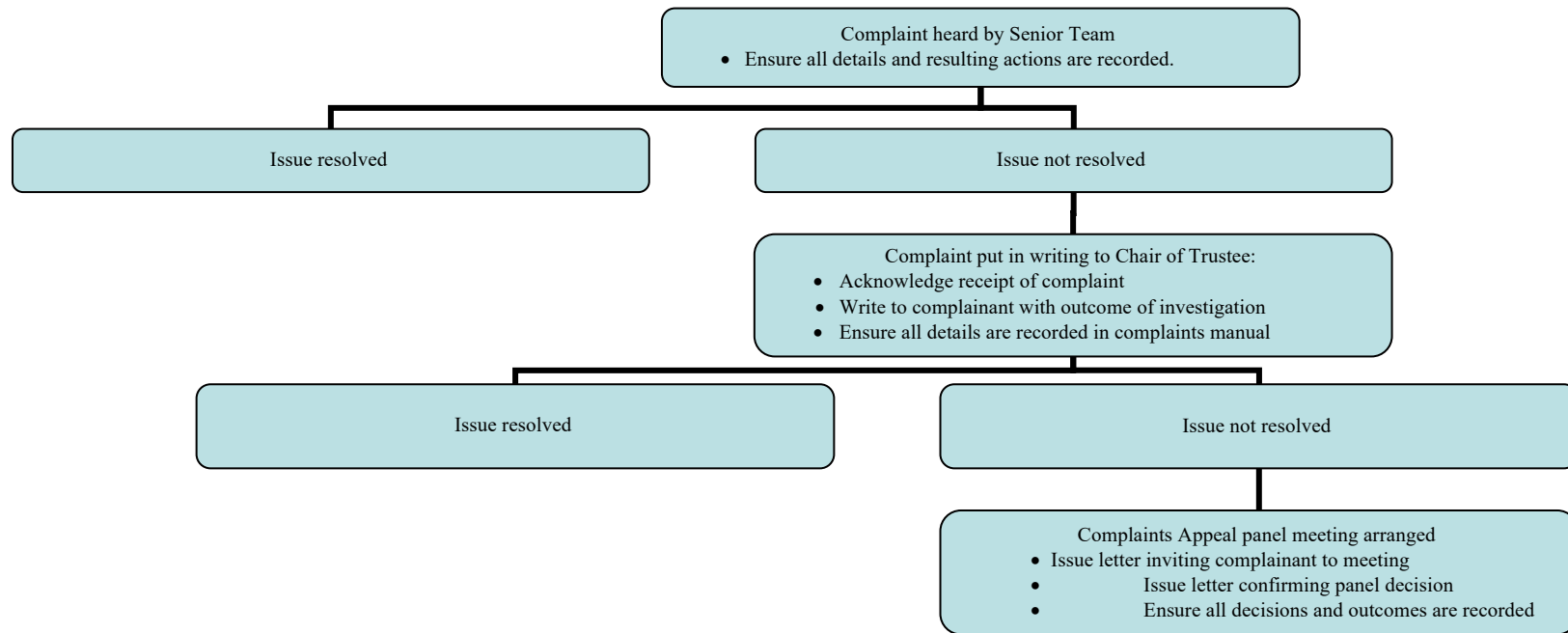
- It is important that the appeal hearing is independent and impartial and that it is seen to be so. No Trustee may sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it. In deciding the make-up of the panel, the Chair of Trustees needs to ensure that it represents a cross-section of the Trustee Board being sensitive to issues of race, gender and religious affiliation (if appropriate).
- The aim of the hearing, which needs to be held in private, will always be to resolve the complaint and to achieve conciliation between Whoopsadaisy and the complainant. However, it has to be recognized that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome of the hearing. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations, which will aim to satisfy the complainant that his/her complaint has been taken seriously.
- All members of the Appeal Panel need to be aware of the Whoopsadaisy' complaint policy and procedure.

In general, the Appeal Panel will take one of the following courses of action

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part.
- Decide on an appropriate action to resolve the complaint.
- Recommend changes to Whoopsadaisy's systems or procedures.

The decision of the Appeal Panel is binding and is final.

Summary of Dealing with Complaints





Whoopsadaisy Complaint Form

Please complete and return to..... who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your Name:

Daytime Tel:

Evening Tel:

Please give details of your complaint:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details>

Signature:

Date:

-----**For official use only**

Date acknowledgement sent:

By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date: