

COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK PROCEDURE

Introduction

The Family Centre is a user-led organisation and we welcome and encourage feedback from our family members, including children and young people. We also value feedback from professionals that support our families.

We recognise that we will receive positive and negative feedback, and that we may also receive complaints.

Ways to provide feedback

The Family Centre proactively seeks feedback from our service users in the following ways:

- We run an annual user survey which is available online and can be completed anonymously.
- We make paper copies of the annual survey available at some of our events and in our office.
- We have a feedback board for children at some events, allowing them to put “smiley face stickers” against headings to let us know what they enjoy.
- We make ad-hoc requests for feedback through our facebook group or our email newsletter.
- We consult face to face with service users, including children and young people.
- We ask course attendees to complete an evaluation.
- Regularly asking young people for feedback at youth club sessions.

However we welcome feedback on a continuous basis and users should not feel limited to the above methods of feedback. Other ways they can provide feedback include:

- To staff, volunteers and trustees when attending an event organised by The Family Centre.
- By email to staff at any time.
- In writing.
- When visiting The Family Centre’s office.
- By telephoning The Family Centre’s office.
- By leaving a comment on our facebook page.
- By using the “Give us feedback” area of the website which allows for anonymous feedback to be submitted via Survey Monkey.

We recognise that some of our service users are native BSL users and wherever possible we will seek to provide an interpreter or a competent BSL user to record user feedback.

What we do with feedback

All feedback is captured and recorded on our Feedback Database.

If the feedback is positive we will thank you for the feedback and it will be shared across the organisation.

If the feedback is negative, then we will respond as soon as possible letting the user know what actions we are able to take to improve the service they receive in the future. We will keep a record of the response and the date it was made.

If the feedback relates to a request for an activity, or service, it will be taken into consideration when planning future activities. Wherever possible The Family Centre likes to organise activities based on user feedback, but of course we need to make sure that it is feasible.

The results of our Annual User Survey are collated and a report is published on our website. This report will include comments made and our response. Not all comments will be included, but there will be a representative selection.

Complaints

A service user may prefer to make a complaint rather than providing negative feedback.

The Family Centre will consider the matter to be a complaint if:

- It is made using our Complaint Form.
- If the individual tells us they are making a complaint.
- If the individual tells us they are unhappy with our response to their negative feedback.
- If feedback is received regarding unacceptable behaviour of staff, trustees or volunteers.
- If we have not adhered to our policies and procedures.
- If there has been an incidence of discrimination or harassment.

Making a complaint

If you wish to make a complaint, we provide a Complaint Form but it is not a requirement that this form is used and we will accept complaints in person to staff, trustees and volunteers, by email, by phone, in writing or by text.

We recognise that some of our service users are native BSL users and wherever possible we will seek to provide an interpreter or a competent BSL user to record and respond to complaints.

Receiving a Complaint Form

When a completed Complaint Form is received it will be recorded on the Feedback Database as a complaint, and a written acknowledgment will be sent to the Complainant within 2 working days of receipt. Usually we will respond in the same way as we received the complaint – i.e. by email or letter. If the complaint is sent to a named individual there may be a delay in receipt as we are a small charity, with part-time staff and emails and letters are opened by the addressee only.

If the person receiving the complaint is able to immediately resolve the issue they will:

- Complete part 3 of the Complaint Form
- Provide details of the resolution in writing to the Complainant at the same time as acknowledging the complaint.
- Pass the completed Complaint Form and all associated correspondence to the Centre Manager.
- Update the Feedback Database to indicate a resolution has been given.

If the person receiving the Complaint is unable to deal with the matter immediately, they will:

- Advise the Complainant that the matter is being investigated and give the name of the person who is investigating.
- Advise the Complainant of the timescales for the investigation.

If the person receiving the complaint is the subject of the complaint it will be passed to the Centre Manager. If the complaint is about the Centre Manager it will be passed to the trustees for action. The person handling the complaint will then:

- Advise the Complainant that the matter is being investigated and give the name of the person who is investigating.
- Advise the Complainant of the timescales for the investigation.

Receiving a complaint in another form

If the complaint is received face to face, or by telephone it should be clarified if the Complainant is offering feedback or is making a complaint.

The person receiving the complaint should:

- Listen carefully to the person, particularly if they are angry and allow them to let off steam.
- Do not argue or contradict them.
- Establish the facts of the complaint clearly.
- Rephrase what the person just said to ensure that
 - you clearly understand their concern
 - they feel understood and you are both dealing with the same issue
- Explain what will happen next

If the complaint is received by text, it should be acknowledged by text within 2 working days and the Complainant should be offered a telephone conversation or face to face meeting to clarify their issue.

If the complaint is received by email further clarification will be requested by email within 2 working days if required.

The person receiving the complaint will complete parts 1 and 2 of the Complaint Form and then follow the process above, ensuring that a copy of the Complaint Form is sent with the written acknowledgement.

Investigating a complaint

All complaints under investigation will be given a high priority with the aim of resolving the issue within 10 working days of receipt.

The Complainant will be advised of the expected timescale when the complaint is acknowledged. If any significant delay is expected the reasons for this should be made clear – for example if the complaint relates to an individual who is on holiday or on sickness leave.

If the anticipated timescale cannot be met, the Complainant should be advised as soon as the Investigator becomes aware there will be a delay.

Resolving a complaint

The resolution of a complaint may involve:

- An individual changing their actions, behaviour or approach.
Any complaint about an individual will be discussed with their line manager, and a resolution agreed. The line manager may choose to review the individual's approach at subsequent

Supervisions or at the Annual Staff Appraisal. In some cases the behaviour may be considered misconduct and will be addressed through the Disciplinary Procedure.

- Changing organisational process at The Family Centre.
A complaint may highlight a weakness in the charities procedures which will be addressed by the Centre Manager and/or the trustees.
- Taking the decision that no further action is required.
The complaint may arise from a particular set of circumstances which will not occur again or The Family Centre may feel the that the complaint is not justified.

When a complaint is resolved the person dealing with the issue will:

- Write to the Complainant advising of the actions taken to resolve a complaint.
- Update the Feedback Database
- Complete Part 3 of the Complaint Form
- Pass the completed Complaint Form and all associated correspondence to the Centre Manager

Unsatisfactory resolution of a complaint

If the Complainant is not happy with the way their complaint has been handled they should write to the trustees explaining why they are dissatisfied and what actions they consider appropriate.

The trustees will consider the matter at their next scheduled meeting. The trustees meet a minimum of four times a year, but may schedule an additional meeting to consider the issue if it is deemed necessary.

The trustees will write to the Complainant with their decision which is final.



COMPLAINT FORM

This form must be completed for all complaints. It can be completed by the Complainant, or may be completed by the person receiving the complaint. The complaint will be acknowledged within two working days of receipt and a copy of this form will be included.

PART 1

Complainant details	
Name	
Address	
Email	
Daytime phone number	
Which communication methods are acceptable (please tick all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Written English <input type="checkbox"/> Spoken English <input type="checkbox"/> BSL
Details of complaint	
Date submitted	
Method of complaint	<input type="checkbox"/> Form completed by complainant <input type="checkbox"/> Complaint made face to face to staff, volunteer or trustee <input type="checkbox"/> Complaint made by phone to face to staff, volunteer or trustee <input type="checkbox"/> Complaint sent by email <input type="checkbox"/> Complaint sent in writing
Event or service which is the subject of the complaint	
Details of the complaint	

PART 3

Follow up actions	
Date received	
Date acknowledge	
Person handling the complaint	
Date resolved	
Date complainant informed of resolution	
Actions taken	