

## Complaints and Representation Procedure for Local Authorities and Members of the Public

### Scope

This policy details the complaints procedure for Local Authorities and their staff and for members of the public. If you are a child, a parent or carer of a child, a foster carer or anyone else for whom the agency has agreed to provide a service please see this [complaints](#) procedure.

### Introduction

Community Foster Care welcomes all comments and feedback about the way we work, whether this is positive or negative. If anyone has a complaint or are unhappy about the way we work and wish to make representations, we will aim to resolve the matter as quickly as fairly as possible and will only share information where it is relevant..

Community Foster Care is committed to excellence in all its dealings, whether that be with our children; their parents; our foster carers; members of the public or placing Local Authorities. We view complaints as an opportunity to review the experience provided and turn the experience into a positive one for all parties, as well as learn from the situation and improve our practice accordingly.

The purpose of our complaints procedure for Local Authorities and Members of the Public is to ensure that we:

- Actively seek to resolve concerns
- Develop and enhance our services
- Ensure ongoing learning as professionals

We will:

- listen to the issue
- respond swiftly
- be fair and consistent
- offer an explanation or a solution to the matter
- seek to resolve the matter as informally as possible
- offer complainants access to senior member of the team if they wish
- provide support to all staff or foster carers who are the subject of the complaint
- Where possible, ensure confidentiality of the complainant
- record complaints and ensure our regulator has access to them at their next inspection
- use the process as a learning one for the organisation.

In making a complaint we believe most people want:

- to be listened to
- have the issue accepted as being important to them
- to receive an explanation or a solution
- to have their distress acknowledged
- to be assured that the same situation will not re-occur

### How to Complain

## **Stage 1 – Inform any member of staff that you wish to complain.**

The member of staff will note your concerns and discuss it with their manager. The complaint will be recorded. They will identify a member of staff to look into the matter and to seek to resolve it with you.

They will keep you informed and hear from you about what a positive resolution would look like. Once they have investigated the matter, we will provide feedback to you. Once you receive an outcome, you can assess if this resolves the matter for you, or if you would like a senior manager to review the matter.

## **Stage 2 – Raise your complaint with a Senior Manager**

If any member of the public or placing Local Authority are unhappy about the outcome of your complain at stage 1, then we will pass you concern to the relevant senior manager.

**Fostering Services (Community Foster Care)**– Emma Weaver, Registered Manager of Fostering Services on 01452 849301 or by email [emmaw@communityfostercare.co.uk](mailto:emmaw@communityfostercare.co.uk)

**Children Services (Community Family Care) - Sasha Hart** Service Manager for Children’s Service on 01452 849301 or by email [sashah@communityfamilycare.co.uk](mailto:sashah@communityfamilycare.co.uk)

We will acknowledge your complaint within 2-3 working days of receipt. Our fostering services are externally regulated by Ofsted if your complaint relates to our regulated Fostering Service, then you can complain to them and their information is given at the end of this information.

### **We will review your complaint**

We will look into your complaint and speak to as many people as we can who we can see have been involved. The complaint will be investigated normally by the Registered Manager or Service Manager. If the complaint is about a senior manager, then the Chief Executive will appoint another person to investigate the complaint. The person investigating the complaint will need to talk to you to ensure they are clear about the complaint and that you are given the opportunity to go through your complaint in detail. We will aim to respond to your complaint in writing within 20 working days of receipt of your complaint. We will provide details of our findings to you in writing.

## **Stage 3 – If you remain unhappy with our response**

If having read our response to you, you remain unhappy you can contact our Chief Executive, Mark Kingston on 01452 849301 or by email [markk@communityfostercare.co.uk](mailto:markk@communityfostercare.co.uk) to let him know why you are unhappy with the response you have received from Community Foster Care. You must do this within 20 working days of receiving our response.

The Chief Executive may decide to investigate the matter himself or commission an independent person from outside of Community Foster Care to do so. Whoever undertakes this investigation will review all the information from the initial response and may decide to undertake further interviews. You will receive a written response within 20 working days from telling us you remain dissatisfied.

## **Stage 4 – If you remain unsatisfied**

If you remain dissatisfied with the second response you have received from Community Foster Care then if the matter relates to our fostering services you can contact Ofsted who regulates the Agency.

Their contact details are:

Ofsted  
Piccadilly  
Gate Store  
Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) Telephone: 0300 123 4666.

If you concern relates to services provided by Community Family Care, you have the right to make representations to the [Local Government Ombudsman](#) if you are still not satisfied.

### **Confidentiality**

In the event that a complaint is received from a Local Authority in relation to a child/ren they have placed, the foster carers will be made aware of the complaint as it will need to be investigated and possibly placed before our Foster Care Panel. The complaint may also trigger other policies such as Breaches of Standards of Foster Care or have safeguarding concerns.

In the event that a complaint is received from a member of the public we will only tell the people involved in resolving your complaint about it and its contents. After the complaint is concluded we will keep a summary record on file using guidance from the Data Protection Act. All complaints are shown to the Ofsted Inspector when undertaking their visits.