



New Forest Outreach Support C.I.C

Complaints, Concerns & Feedback Policy

Approved By: Director

Last Reviewed: 30/06/2026

Next Review Date: 30/06/2027

Version: 1.2

Statement of Intent

New Forest Outreach Support C.I.C. (NFOS) is committed to providing safe, inclusive and high quality services for children, young people, families and professionals.

We recognise that, despite our best efforts, concerns, complaints or misunderstandings may occasionally arise. We believe that listening to feedback and responding openly and fairly helps us improve the quality of our services, strengthen relationships and maintain trust within our community.

We encourage anyone who has concerns about our services to raise them as soon as possible so that they can be addressed promptly, fairly and professionally.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear, fair and transparent process for receiving, investigating and resolving complaints, concerns and feedback.

This policy aims to:

- Encourage open communication.
- Resolve concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure complaints are investigated fairly and objectively.
- Protect children, families, staff and volunteers.
- Promote learning and continuous improvement.
- Comply with relevant legislation and best practice.

Legal Framework

This policy has been developed with reference to:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current statutory guidance)
- Equality Act 2010
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Consumer Rights Act 2015 (where applicable)
- Human Rights Act 1998

Scope

This policy applies to concerns, complaints or feedback relating to:

- Discovery Club
- Outreach Support
- Home Support
- Alternative Provision
- Hub Hire
- Community activities
- Staff, volunteers or representatives acting on behalf of NFOS
- The quality of services provided
- Customer service
- Communication
- Organisational procedures

This policy does not replace safeguarding procedures, staff disciplinary procedures, grievance procedures or whistleblowing arrangements.

Our Commitment

At NFOS we are committed to:

- Listening respectfully.
- Taking all concerns seriously.
- Investigating complaints fairly and without prejudice.
- Treating everyone with dignity and respect.
- Keeping complainants informed throughout the process.
- Learning from complaints and feedback.
- Using feedback to improve our services.

We also ask that everyone communicating with our organisation treats our staff, volunteers and representatives with the same respect.

Who Can Raise a Complaint?

Complaints, concerns or feedback may be submitted by:

- Parents or carers
- Children and young people (where appropriate)
- Family members
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Professionals
- Commissioners
- Schools
- Members of the public
- Any individual affected by the services provided by NFOS

Anonymous complaints will also be considered where sufficient information is available to allow an investigation.

How to Raise a Complaint

Complaints can be submitted by:

- Completing the NFOS Complaints Form.
- Emailing kelseyk@newforestoutreach.co.uk.
- Emailing enquiries@newforestoutreach.co.uk
- By telephone: 02380019920

Where a complaint is made by telephone, the member of staff receiving the complaint will complete the official complaints form to ensure an accurate record is maintained.

Complaint Management

All complaints should be directed to:

Kelsey

Senior Operations & Finance Coordinator

Kelsey is responsible for:

- Logging complaints.
- Acknowledging receipt.
- Investigating complaints where appropriate.
- Keeping complainants updated.
- Escalating complaints to the Director where necessary.

Amy Bradsworth, Director, retains overall responsibility for the complaints process.

If a complaint relates directly to Kelsey, it should be submitted to Amy Bradsworth at ceo@newforestoutreach.co.uk who will investigate the matter personally.

Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, concerns will first be addressed informally through discussion and clarification.

Many issues can be resolved quickly without requiring a formal investigation.

Choosing an informal resolution does not prevent an individual from making a formal complaint if they remain dissatisfied.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Upon receipt of a formal complaint:

- An acknowledgement will be sent within **2 working days**.
- The complaint will be logged securely.
- An investigating officer will be appointed where appropriate.
- Relevant evidence will be gathered.
- Individuals involved may be interviewed.
- Records may be reviewed.
- A fair and impartial investigation will be undertaken.

Where additional information is required, the complainant may be contacted during the investigation.

Timescales

NFOS aims to provide a full written response within **10 working days** of receiving a formal complaint.

Where this is not possible due to the complexity of the investigation or other exceptional circumstances, the complainant will be informed of:

- The reason for the delay.
- The progress of the investigation.
- A revised timescale for completion.

Outcomes

Following the investigation, NFOS will provide a written outcome explaining the findings.

Where a complaint is upheld, appropriate action may include:

- Providing an explanation or clarification.
- Offering an apology where appropriate.
- Taking corrective action.
- Reviewing policies or procedures.
- Additional staff training or supervision.
- Improvements to service delivery.
- An appropriate remedy where reasonable and proportionate.

The action taken will always depend upon the individual circumstances of the complaint.

Appeals

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they may request a final internal review by the Director.

The Director will review:

- The complaint.
- The investigation.
- The outcome.
- Any additional evidence provided.

Following the final internal review, if the complainant remains dissatisfied, they will be advised of any appropriate external organisation or commissioning body that may be able to consider the matter further, such as Hampshire County Council (where they commissioned the service) or any relevant regulator where applicable.

Safeguarding Concerns

Complaints involving safeguarding concerns, allegations of abuse, neglect or behaviour that may place a child, young person or vulnerable person at risk will **not** be managed solely under this Complaints Policy.

Such concerns will immediately be managed in accordance with the NFOS Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

Safeguarding concerns may also be submitted using the NFOS Safeguarding Concern Form.

Where appropriate, concerns may be referred to:

- Children's Services
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Police
- Health professionals
- Other relevant statutory agencies

The complaints process may be paused while safeguarding procedures are followed.

Confidentiality

Complaints will be handled confidentially and information will only be shared with those who need it to investigate and resolve the matter.

Information will be processed in accordance with:

- UK GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018
- NFOS Privacy Policy
- Confidentiality, Data Protection & Information Security Policy

Protecting Staff During Complaints

NFOS is committed to protecting the wellbeing, safety and dignity of all staff and volunteers.

Reception and administrative staff are not expected to resolve complex complaints or tolerate abusive behaviour.

Their role is to:

- Listen professionally.
- Record the concern accurately.
- Provide information about the complaints process.
- Refer the matter to the appropriate member of the management team.

If a member of staff feels threatened, intimidated or unsafe at any time, they should end the conversation where appropriate, seek support from a senior manager and follow the organisation's Health & Safety and Incident Reporting procedures.

The safety of staff will always take priority.

Unreasonable, Abusive or Aggressive Behaviour

NFOS welcomes complaints and understands that people may be upset or frustrated when raising concerns.

However, abusive, threatening or aggressive behaviour towards staff, volunteers or representatives will not be tolerated.

Examples include:

- Shouting or aggressive behaviour.
- Swearing or abusive language.
- Personal insults.
- Harassment or intimidation.
- Threats of violence.
- Discriminatory language.
- Repeated contact after a complaint has been concluded.
- Malicious or knowingly false allegations.

Where unacceptable behaviour occurs, NFOS may:

- End telephone calls or meetings.
- Request future communication in writing.
- Restrict communication to a nominated member of staff.
- Issue a written warning.
- Refuse face-to-face meetings unless suitable arrangements are in place.
- Suspend or withdraw services where appropriate following a management review and risk assessment.
- Report criminal behaviour, threats or harassment to the Police.

Where staff believe there is an immediate risk to themselves or others, they should remove themselves from the situation where it is safe to do so and contact the emergency services by calling **999** if required.

All incidents involving abusive behaviour will be documented and reviewed by senior management.

Anonymous Complaints

NFOS accepts anonymous complaints.

Where sufficient information is available, anonymous complaints will be investigated fairly and proportionately.

Whilst anonymity may limit our ability to investigate fully or provide feedback, all concerns will be assessed seriously.

Record Keeping

All complaints will be:

- Logged securely.
- Assigned a reference number where appropriate.
- Stored in accordance with the organisation's data protection procedures.
- Retained only for as long as necessary.

Complaint records will be used to support organisational learning and continuous improvement.

Learning, Feedback & Continuous Improvement

New Forest Outreach Support C.I.C. values all feedback, whether it is positive, constructive or identifies areas where we can improve.

We recognise that complaints, concerns, compliments and constructive criticism all play an important role in helping us develop and strengthen our services.

Every complaint is reviewed not only to determine whether it is upheld, but also to identify whether improvements can be made to our policies, procedures, communication, staff training or service delivery, even where the complaint is not upheld.

Complaint trends and feedback will be reviewed periodically by senior management to identify recurring themes, improve working practices and reduce the likelihood of similar issues arising.

Where appropriate, lessons learned will be shared with staff and incorporated into training, supervision, policy reviews and operational planning.

We actively encourage parents, carers, children, young people, professionals and members of the community to share their views and suggestions. Constructive feedback helps us continue to provide safe, inclusive and high-quality services and ensures we remain responsive to the needs of those we support.

Our aim is to create a culture of openness, transparency and continuous improvement, where every concern is treated as an opportunity to learn, develop and strengthen the services we provide.

Monitoring & Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to:

- Changes in legislation.
- Safeguarding updates.
- Significant complaints.
- Learning from investigations.
- Operational changes.
- Best practice guidance.

The Director is responsible for ensuring this policy remains effective, compliant and reflective of the values and standards of New Forest Outreach Support C.I.C.