



National Star

Realising the aspirations
of people with disabilities

Complaints Procedures

- The Complaints Procedure is open to all people served by the charity, to include service users, parents, employers, neighbours, supporters & visitors.
- National Star employees must use the internal Grievance Procedure, where the complaint is about a member of staff but can use the complaints procedure where the complaint is about a service that National Star is responsible for.
- All formal complaints to be systematically sent onto the Chief Executive
- There is no standard complaints form as complainants should be enabled to complain using the method that best suits them. The person wishing to complain may well choose to use an 'Advocacy Service' to support them.
- Where possible, the Nominated Senior Manager will be the Senior Manager responsible for the department /employee about which/whom complaint has been made.
- The investigation will be conducted in strict accordance with the Complaints Policy
- All Complainants will be advised of right to appeal if still dissatisfied.
- The Appeal to the Chair of Governors / Trustees is the final stage of the Complaints Procedure within the charity.

1. How are complaints received / made?

All queries/concerns should be addressed as a matter of urgency by staff at the charity. They will make every effort to ensure the concerns/issues are addressed or rectified in accordance with the wishes of the complainant.

All staff are to ensure that complaints are passed onto the Chief Executive as soon as possible within 12 hours of the complaint being made. This should be done via e-mail.

Note:

- All safeguarding concerns are to be referred to the safeguarding procedure
- If the complaint is about the CEO it should be passed to the Chair of Trustees

The Chief Executive will record the details of the complaint and a standard letter of acknowledgement will be sent within 48 hours to the person making the complaint. The CEO will alert the Chair of Governors / Trustees to the complaint within 48 hours.

2. Who supervises the investigation into the complaint?

A Senior Manager will be nominated by the CEO or another Director, to supervise the investigation into the complaint.

3. How is a complaint investigated?

The Nominated Senior Manager will contact the complainant to ensure that there is clarity about the full nature of the complaint and that it has been understood appropriately by the charity.

This individual will then tell the complainant how they propose to conduct the investigation and the timeframe within which it will be reviewed. At this stage a date on which information about the results of the investigation will be provided to the complainant will be agreed.

4. Who replies to the complainant?

The Chief Executive will review the investigation report prepared by the Nominated Senior Manager and the draft reply to the complainant. The Nominated Senior Manager will then convey the reply to the complainant by letter, or where appropriate they should arrange to meet. This response will be made no more than 14 days after the complaint has been received but will always be handled as a matter of urgency.

5. What if the complainant remains dissatisfied?

If the complainant requires more information, the Chief Executive will respond by sending a further written response or by carrying out a further investigation.

If the complainant disagrees with the outcome, the Chief Executive will record details of the appeal and will then forward relevant papers to the Chair of Governors or the Chair of Trustees, (whoever is more appropriate).

6. How is an appeal handled?

The Chair of Governors / Trustees will consider the nature of the complaint and carry out a further investigation, supported by a Senior Manager who has not been involved in the initial investigation. They will then write to the complainant with the outcome or meet with the complainant face to face.

7. Who can the complainant refer to outside the Charity

Depending on the nature of the complaint the complainant can refer the complaint onto external bodies. The Chief Executive or Chair of Governors / Trustees will give the complainant specific information relating to the identified complaint.

The key bodies will generally be the Local Authority, the Care Quality Commission, the Health and Safety Executive, the Charity Commission, the Fundraising Regulator, and Ofsted.

If the complaint relates to Fundraising, the complainant will be advised that any referral to the Fundraising Regulator should be made within two months of the response from the charity.