Shape House

Complaints Policy

Review Log:

This policy is to be reviewed annually.

Updated by:	Approved by*:*	Date:	Review Date:
Chris Medwell Jamie Christian	Jane Cox	27/07/2026	01/09/2027
Jamie Christian	Jane Cox	31/08/2026	31/08/2027

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1. Policy Statement

Shape House Doncaster is committed to providing a high-quality education and positive experience for all learners, families, and professionals. We recognise that, on occasion, concerns or complaints may arise. This policy sets out the procedure for raising, investigating, and resolving complaints in a fair, transparent, and timely manner.

We aim to handle all complaints with respect, impartiality, confidentiality, and a focus on resolution and learning.

2. Scope

This policy applies to parents, carers, learners, referring schools, local authorities, and external partners. It covers complaints about the quality of education or care, staff conduct, or operational issues. It does not apply to safeguarding concerns, staff grievances, or whistleblowing, which are covered by separate policies.

3. Aims

- Ensure complaints are taken seriously and resolved quickly.
- Encourage informal resolution where possible.
- Provide a clear, fair, and consistent process.
- Ensure outcomes are communicated effectively and lessons are learned.

4. Guiding Principles

- **Fairness:** Each complaint will be considered on its merits.
- **Timeliness:** All complaints will be acknowledged and investigated promptly.
- **Accessibility:** Support will be provided if needed.
- **Confidentiality:** Information shared only with those involved.
- **Resolution-focused:** The goal is improvement, not blame.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant: Raise concerns promptly, provide relevant details, and engage constructively.

Staff Member or DSL: Listen, respond informally if possible, and record details.

Centre Lead: Oversee formal investigations and ensure fairness.

Director: Review appeals and ensure policy compliance.

6. Complaints Procedure

- **Stage 1: Informal Resolution**

Many concerns can be resolved informally through discussion with the relevant member of staff or DSL. Concerns should be raised within 10 working days of the incident and resolved within 5 working days. If unresolved, the complaint can proceed to Stage 2.

- **Stage 2: Formal Complaint**

A formal complaint should be submitted in writing to a Centre Lead. The complaint must include details of the issue, steps taken to resolve it, and the desired outcome. The Centre Lead will acknowledge receipt within 3 working days, investigate, and respond within 15 working days.

- **Stage 3: Appeal**

If dissatisfied, the complainant may appeal in writing to the Directors within 10 working days. A panel of at least three independent members will review the case and reach a final decision within 20 working days. The panel's decision is final.

7. Recording and Monitoring

All complaints are recorded in the Complaints Register, including nature, actions, and outcomes. Data is reviewed termly to identify trends and inform improvement.

8. Confidentiality

Complaints are handled confidentially. Information is shared only with staff involved in handling or investigating the complaint. Records are securely stored in compliance with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

9. Unreasonable or Persistent Complaints

Shape House Doncaster reserves the right to manage unreasonable or repeated complaints deemed vexatious or malicious. Such cases will be referred to the Directors for a final decision on future communication arrangements.

10. Learning and Improvement

Following each complaint, the provision will review policies and provide feedback or training as needed. Learning outcomes will be used to prevent recurrence and strengthen practice.

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11. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or organisational changes occur. Feedback from complaints will be used to improve service quality.

12. Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Allegations Against Staff Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy