



Cherry Lane Therapeutic Homes Complaints Policy

Introduction At Cherry Lane Children's Homes, we believe that young people should feel safe and comfortable when expressing their concerns or making complaints. Our policy ensures that all complaints are taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, and resolved in a timely manner. We adhere to current government guidance and the principles outlined in the Learning from Complaints: Children's Statutory Complaints Process. This procedure is for children/young people, families, professionals, staff and everyone in our community. Staff may also consider grievance or whistleblowing procedures.

Information and Support Upon arrival or shortly after, all young people will receive information on how to raise concerns or make complaints. This information is available in the Young Person's Guide and our website. Young people will also receive assistance to understand the complaints process and how to access advocacy services.

Raising a Concern

1. **Informal Resolution:** When a young person raises a concern, mentors will first discuss the issue with them to try to resolve it informally.
2. **Support:** If the concern is not resolved, the young person will be encouraged to write down their complaint on a complaints form, in their own words if possible. Life coaches are available to assist with this process.
3. **Communication:** This can also be done on email to the Responsible Individual, or they can request a phone call.
4. **Protection from Reprisal:** Young people will be protected from reprisal or negative consequences for making a complaint or representation.

Formal Complaints Process

1. **Filing a Complaint:** If the young person remains concerned, they can file a formal complaint. Complaints can be made internally, to the independent visitor or through their local authority, or by contacting Ofsted at 0300 123 1231.
2. **Independent Contact:** If the young person is uncomfortable sharing their complaint with mentors or the home's manager, they can contact the designated independent visitor, at Elena Balzer-Harwood <elena.cherrylanetservices@gmail.com>. Elena will take full details and investigate the matter.

Acknowledgment and Investigation

1. **Acknowledgment:** All in-house complaints will be acknowledged within 72 hours.



2. **Investigation:** The investigation will be conducted within 28 days by a manager who is not the subject of the complaint. The young person will be kept informed of the progress.
3. **Outcome:** The findings and outcome of the investigation will be reported to the complainant and a full record will be made. This record will also be shared with the relevant local authority social worker.

Review and Further Action

1. **Review:** If the young person is unhappy with the outcome, they can request a review of the complaint internally or through their local authority.
2. **Local Authority Process:** The local authority will acknowledge the complaint within 10 days to offer an informal resolution. If unresolved, the complaint will proceed to stage 2, involving an investigation by the Head of Service, with a response due within 20 working days.
3. **Escalation:** If still unresolved, the complaint can be referred to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) for further investigation.

Record Keeping and Reporting All complaints and their outcomes will be documented and included in the organisation's quality of care reviews (Reg 44, Reg 45). Complaints records will detail the nature of the complaint, the steps taken during the investigation, and the resolution. These records will be available for inspection by regulatory bodies/Ofsted. An annual summary of complaints and their resolutions will be provided to Ofsted upon request.

Safeguarding and Whistleblowing For complaints involving allegations or whistleblowing, please refer to the safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures.

Contact Information

- **Internal Complaints:** Life coaches or home's manager
- **Independent Visitor:** Elena Balzer-Harwood
<elena.cherrylanetservices@gmail.com>
- **Local Authority Complaints:**
- **Ofsted:** 0300 123 1231
- **Local Government Ombudsman:** 0300 061 0614 Web: www.lgo.org.uk

We are committed to ensuring that all young people feel heard and respected, and that their complaints are addressed promptly and effectively.