



Highfields Centre Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

Highfields Centre is committed to providing excellent services and facilities to all users, whether internal staff, volunteers, or external visitors, clients, and partners. This policy outlines our approach to managing complaints and ensuring fair, timely, and effective resolutions in line with UK legal and regulatory requirements.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide a clear framework for handling complaints from internal and external users.
- Ensure all complaints are treated seriously, fairly, and impartially.
- Promote transparency and accountability in the handling of complaints.
- Facilitate continuous improvement by using feedback to identify and address areas of concern.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Internal users, including staff, volunteers, and trustees.
- External users, including service users, visitors, contractors, and partner organisations.

4. Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction about the services, facilities, or conduct of Highfields Centre, its staff, volunteers, or representatives. Complaints may relate to:

- The quality of services or facilities.
- The behaviour or conduct of staff, volunteers, or representatives.
- Policies, procedures, or decisions made by the Centre.
- Any other issue perceived as unfair or inappropriate.

5. Principles

Highfields Centre is committed to:

- Treating all complaints with respect and confidentiality.
- Ensuring complaints are investigated impartially and thoroughly.
- Providing timely responses and resolutions.
- Protecting complainants from retaliation or adverse consequences.

- Maintaining accurate records of complaints and outcomes.

6. Procedure for Raising a Complaint

6.1 Informal Resolution

Complainants are encouraged to raise their concerns informally in the first instance by contacting a relevant member of staff or manager. Many issues can be resolved quickly through open and constructive dialogue.

6.2 Formal Complaints

If the issue cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint should be submitted in writing to the Centre Manager. The complaint should include:

- The complainant's name and contact details.
- A clear description of the issue, including dates and relevant details.
- Any supporting evidence.
- The desired outcome or resolution.

Formal complaints can be submitted via email, post, or in person to:

The Head of Centre, 96 Melbourne Road, Leicester LE2 0DS.

Email: info@highfieldscentre.ac.uk

7. Complaints Handling Process

1. **Acknowledgement:** Complaints will be acknowledged within five (5) working days of receipt.
2. **Investigation:** A designated complaints officer will investigate the matter. This may include gathering evidence, interviewing involved parties, and reviewing relevant policies or procedures.
3. **Response:** A formal written response will be provided within twenty (20) working days, outlining the findings, decision, and any proposed actions. If further time is required, the complainant will be informed and provided with an updated timeline.
4. **Resolution:** Where appropriate, corrective actions will be implemented, and the complainant will be informed of the outcomes.

8. Appeals

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal the decision within ten (10) working days of receiving the response. Appeals should be directed to the Chair of Trustees or a designated independent officer. The appeal will be reviewed, and a final decision will be issued within twenty (20) working days.

9. Unreasonable or Vexatious Complaints

Highfields Centre reserves the right to decline complaints that are unreasonable, repetitive, or vexatious. In such cases, the complainant will be informed of the decision in writing, with reasons provided.

10. Monitoring and Reporting

All complaints will be recorded and monitored to identify trends and areas for improvement. An annual report summarising complaints and actions taken will be presented to the Board of Trustees.

11. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaints will be handled in line with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Personal information will only be shared as necessary to investigate and resolve the complaint.

12. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required to ensure it remains effective, relevant, and compliant with legal and regulatory standards.

13. Contact Information

For further information or assistance, please contact:

Highfields Centre Management Team

96 Melbourne Road, Leicester LE2 0DS

Email: info@highfieldscentre.ac.uk

0116 253 1053

Date: 09/10/2024

Reviewed by: Priya Thamotheram - Head of Centre

Next Review Date: 09/10/2025

Policy Owned by: Highfields Centre Governing Body