



Compliments, Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure

1. Our Aim

Windmills is committed to providing a high-quality, compassionate and supportive service to children and young people across Staffordshire when someone close to them has been told that they are going to die or has died.

We recognise that children, young people, families, professionals, volunteers, supporters and other people who come into contact with Windmills may wish to share feedback about their experience with us.

We welcome compliments, feedback, suggestions and complaints because they help us understand what we are doing well and where we can improve.

We aim to ensure that:

- giving a compliment, feedback or making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- children and young people are supported to have their voices heard and to express their views in a way that is appropriate for their age and understanding;
- all feedback is listened to and taken seriously;
- complaints are treated as an opportunity to learn and improve;
- complaints are dealt with promptly, respectfully, sensitively and, where appropriate, confidentially;
- people making a complaint are kept informed throughout the process;
- where we have made a mistake, we acknowledge this, apologise and take appropriate action to put things right;
- we learn from complaints and use them to improve our services, policies and practice; and
- complaints and feedback are reviewed regularly to identify learning and areas for improvement.

We recognise that some concerns can be resolved quickly and informally. Where appropriate, we will seek to resolve concerns at the earliest opportunity, while ensuring that anyone wishing to make a formal complaint can do so.

Our approach is to:

- listen carefully and without judgement;
- respond in a calm, respectful and supportive way;
- resolve concerns as quickly as reasonably possible;
- keep matters proportionate and appropriate to the circumstances;
- ensure that no one is disadvantaged because they have raised a concern or made a complaint; and
- use feedback to improve the experience of children, young people, families and everyone who engages with Windmills.

2. Definitions

A compliment is an expression of satisfaction, appreciation or positive feedback about Windmills, our services, staff, volunteers or the experience someone has had with us.

Feedback is any comment, suggestion or observation that may help Windmills understand what is working well or where improvements could be made.

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about Windmills, our services, facilities, staff, volunteers or the way in which a service has been provided.

A complaint may be made verbally, in writing, by email, telephone, through a parent, carer or professional, or by any other appropriate method.

Staff and volunteers should be able to recognise an expression of dissatisfaction even when the words “complaint” or “complain” are not used.

Where a child or young person wishes to raise a concern or complaint, Windmills will consider their age, understanding, communication needs and individual circumstances when deciding how best to support them.

3. Purpose

Windmills values positive feedback and is pleased to hear when children, young people, families, professionals, volunteers and supporters have had a positive experience with us.

Compliments and positive feedback will be recorded where appropriate and shared with relevant staff and volunteers so that good practice can be recognised and celebrated.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- compliments and feedback are welcomed;
- complaints are handled fairly, consistently and sensitively;
- children and young people are given appropriate opportunities to express their views;
- concerns are addressed as quickly as possible;

- complaints are investigated appropriately and independently where required; and
- learning from complaints is used to improve Windmills' services and practice.

4. Complaints

Windmills' complaints procedure is intended to ensure that complaints are:

- taken seriously;
- handled fairly and consistently;
- dealt with sensitively and respectfully;
- investigated appropriately;
- resolved wherever possible to the satisfaction of the person making the complaint; and
- used to identify learning and improvements.

Making a complaint will not affect a person's right to access Windmills' services or receive support from us.

Where a complaint involves a child or young person, their welfare and best interests will remain central to our response.

5. Responsibilities

Windmills' responsibilities

Windmills will:

- make the complaints process accessible and understandable;
- listen to complaints without making assumptions or judgements;
- acknowledge formal complaints in writing, where appropriate;
- respond within the timescales set out in this policy;
- deal with complaints fairly, reasonably and sensitively;
- maintain appropriate confidentiality;
- keep appropriate records of complaints and their outcomes;
- investigate complaints proportionately and objectively;
- take action where appropriate to put things right;
- identify and share learning from complaints; and
- ensure that serious concerns relating to safeguarding, professional conduct or other risks are dealt with under the appropriate Windmills policy or procedure.

The complainant's responsibilities

Where possible, we ask that a person making a complaint:

- raises their concern as soon as reasonably possible;

- explains the concern as clearly and fully as they can;
- provides any relevant information or evidence;
- allows Windmills a reasonable opportunity to investigate and respond; and
- treats staff, volunteers and others involved in the process with respect.

We recognise that people may find it difficult to raise a complaint, particularly when they are experiencing bereavement or supporting a child or young person. We will therefore take a supportive and understanding approach throughout the process.

6. Confidentiality

Windmills will handle complaints sensitively and maintain confidentiality wherever possible.

Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to respond to, investigate or manage the complaint, or where there is a legal, safeguarding or other legitimate reason for information to be shared.

There may be circumstances where Windmills cannot maintain complete confidentiality, for example where there are concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, or where we have a legal obligation to share information.

Where appropriate, this will be explained to the person making the complaint.

All personal information will be handled in accordance with Windmills' data protection and confidentiality requirements.

7. Complaints Procedure

Windmills will keep appropriate written records of formal complaints and actions taken at each stage of the process.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, concerns should initially be raised with the member of staff or volunteer involved.

The person receiving the concern should listen carefully, establish what has happened and consider whether the matter can be resolved quickly and informally.

An informal resolution might include:

- providing an explanation;
- correcting a misunderstanding;
- apologising where appropriate;
- taking immediate action to resolve the issue; or
- making a change to the way a service is provided.

Not all concerns can or should be dealt with informally. Anyone wishing to make a formal complaint should be supported to do so.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

If a concern cannot be resolved informally, or the person wishes to make a formal complaint, the following process will apply.

a) A formal complaint can be made verbally or in writing. Where a complaint is made verbally, a member of the Windmills team will record the details accurately and, where possible, confirm these with the person making the complaint.

b) The complaint should be passed to the appropriate member of the Windmills management team or the person responsible for overseeing complaints.

If the complaint relates to that person, it will be passed to an appropriate alternative manager or senior person.

If the complaint concerns the Chief Executive or another senior member of staff, it should be referred to the Chair of the Board of Trustees or another appropriate trustee.

c) Windmills will acknowledge the formal complaint in writing within **five working days** of receiving it, where appropriate.

The acknowledgement will explain who is dealing with the complaint and, where possible, the expected timescale for a response.

d) The complaint will be investigated proportionately and objectively. This may include speaking with the people involved, reviewing relevant records or documentation, and considering any information provided by the complainant.

Where the complaint concerns a member of staff or volunteer, they will be given an appropriate opportunity to respond.

e) Windmills will aim to provide a written response within **20 working days** of receiving the formal complaint.

Where a full response cannot be provided within this timeframe, Windmills will contact the complainant to explain the reason for the delay and provide an updated timescale.

The response will explain:

- the outcome of the investigation;
- the reasons for any decisions made;
- any action that has been or will be taken; and
- any learning or improvements identified, where appropriate.

Stage 3 – Review

If the person making the complaint is not satisfied with the response at Stage 2, they may request a review.

The request should explain why they remain dissatisfied and should normally be made within **10 working days** of receiving the Stage 2 response.

The review will normally be undertaken by a senior person who has not previously been involved in investigating the complaint.

Where appropriate, the review may be considered by a small group of trustees or another suitably independent person.

The reviewer may:

- review the original complaint and response;
- examine relevant records;
- speak with staff, volunteers or other people involved; and
- consider any additional information provided.

Windmills will aim to provide the outcome of the review in writing within **20 working days**.

The review outcome will normally be considered the final stage of Windmills' internal complaints procedure.

8. Complaints Made by or on Behalf of a Child or Young Person

Windmills recognises that children and young people may wish to raise a concern or complaint themselves.

We will make reasonable adjustments to support children and young people to express their views, including using age-appropriate language and communication methods.

A child or young person may be supported by an appropriate adult, such as a parent, carer, professional or advocate, where appropriate and with consideration of the child's wishes and best interests.

Where a complaint is made on behalf of a child or young person, Windmills will consider the child's views and wishes wherever it is appropriate and safe to do so.

9. Safeguarding Concerns

A complaint may identify a concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person.

Where this happens, the concern will be managed in accordance with Windmills' Safeguarding Policy and relevant safeguarding procedures.

Safeguarding concerns will take priority over the normal complaints process where necessary.

10. Learning from Complaints

Windmills sees complaints as an important source of learning.

Complaints will be reviewed to identify:

- recurring issues or themes;
- areas where services could be improved;
- training or support needs for staff and volunteers;
- changes required to policies or procedures; and
- opportunities to improve the experience of children, young people and families.

An anonymised summary of complaints and learning may be shared with the Board of Trustees as part of Windmills' governance and quality assurance arrangements.

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and at least annually to ensure that it remains appropriate, effective and consistent with current legislation, guidance and good practice.

Windmills Compliments, Feedback and Complaints Form

We welcome your feedback.

We would like to hear from you if you have had a positive experience with Windmills, have a suggestion about how we could improve, or are unhappy with any part of the service you have received.

You can use this form to make a compliment, provide feedback or make a complaint.

If you would prefer to speak to someone, you can contact a member of the Windmills team and we will support you to share your feedback.

Your details

Name:

THE END OF THE WORLD

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- ☐ About your own experience
- ☐ On behalf of a child or young person
- ☐ On behalf of someone else

What would you like to tell us?

- ☐ Compliment
- ☐ Suggestion
- ☐ Concern
- ☐ Complaint

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What would you like Windmills to do?

Please tell us what you feel would help to resolve the issue or what action you would like us to consider.

Is there anything else you would like us to know?

- ☐ Telephone
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Letter
- ☐ Meeting

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Actions taken:

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LIBRARY

Learning identified:

Date closed:

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